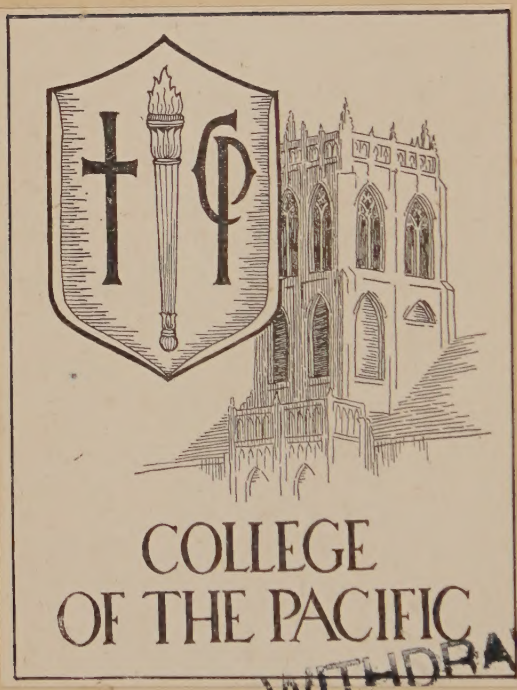

WITHDRAWN

THE DIARY OF A SUPERFLUOUS MAN

AND OTHER STORIES

College of the Pacific

THE WORKS

OF

IVÁN TURGÉNIEFF

Turgenev, Ivan Sergeevich.

THE DIARY OF A SUPERFLUOUS MAN

AND OTHER STORIES

FATHERS AND CHILDREN

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY

ISABEL F. HAPGOOD

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THE DIARY OF A SUPERFLUOUS MAN

(1850)

THE DIARY OF A SUPERFLUOUS MAN

HAMLET OF OVÉTCHI-VÓDY,[1]
March 20, 18 .

THE doctor has just left me. At last I have obtained a categorical answer! Dodge as he might, he could not help saying what he thought, at last. Yes, I shall die soon, very soon. The streams are opening, and I shall float away, probably with the last snows . . . . whither? God knows! To the sea also. Well, all right! If I must die, then 't is better to die in the spring. But is it not ridiculous to begin one's diary perhaps a fortnight before one's death? Where 's the harm? And in what way are fourteen days less than fourteen years, fourteen centuries? In the presence of eternity, they say, everything is of no account—yes; but, in that case, eternity also is of no account. I am falling into speculation, I think: that is a bad sign—am not I beginning to turn coward?—It will be better if I narrate something. It is raw and windy out of doors,—I am forbidden to go out. But what shall I narrate? A well-bred man does not talk

[1] Sheep's-Waters or Springs.—TRANSLATOR.

about his maladies; composing a novel, or something of that sort, is not in my line; reflections about exalted themes are beyond my powers; descriptions of life round about me do not even interest me; and to do nothing is tiresome; to read—is idleness. Eh! I will narrate to myself the story of my own life. A capital idea! When death is approaching it is proper, and can offend no one. I begin.

I was born thirty years ago, the son of a fairly wealthy landed proprietor. My father was a passionate gambler; my mother was a lady with character . . . . a very virtuous lady. Only, I have never known a woman whose virtue afforded less satisfaction. She succumbed under the burden of her merits, and tortured everybody, beginning with herself. During the whole fifty years of her life, she never once rested, never folded her hands; she was eternally bustling and fussing about, like an ant—and without any result whatever, which cannot be said of the ant. An implacable worm gnawed her day and night. Only once did I behold her perfectly quiet,—namely, on the first day after her death, in her coffin. As I gazed at her, it really seemed to me that her face expressed mild surprise; the half-open lips, the sunken cheeks, and the gently-motionless eyes seemed to breathe forth the words: "How good it is not to stir!" Yes, 't is good, 't is good to part at last from the fatiguing con-

sciousness of life, from the importunate and uneasy sense of existence! But that is not the point.

I grew up badly, and not cheerfully. Both my father and my mother loved me; but that did not make things any the easier for me. My father had no power whatever in his own house, and no importance, in his quality of a man given over to a shameful and ruinous vice. He admitted his fall, and, without having the strength to renounce his favourite passion, he endeavoured, at least, by his constantly affectionate and discreet mien, by his submissive humility, to win the indulgence of his exemplary wife. My mamma, in fact, bore her misfortune with that magnificent and ostentatious long-suffering of virtue which contains so much of self-satisfied pride. She never reproached my father for anything, she silently surrendered to him her last penny, and paid his debts; he lauded her to her face and behind her back, but was not fond of staying at home, and petted me on the sly, as though he were himself afraid of contaminating me by his presence. But his ruffled features exhaled such kindness at those times, the feverish smirk on his lips was replaced by such a touching smile, his brown eyes, surrounded by fine wrinkles, beamed with so much love, that I involuntarily pressed my cheek to his cheek, moist and warm with tears. I wiped away those tears

with my handkerchief, and they flowed again, without effort, like the water in an overfilled glass. I set to crying myself, and he soothed me, patted my back with his hand, kissed me all over my face with his quivering lips. Even now, more than twenty years after his death, when I recall my poor father, dumb sobs rise in my throat, and my heart beats—beats as hotly and bitterly, it languishes with as much sorrowful compassion, as though it still had a long time to beat and as though there were anything to feel compassion about!

My mother, on the contrary, always treated me in one way, affectionately, but coldly. Such mothers, moral and just, are frequently to be met with in children's books. She loved me, but I did not love her. Yes! I shunned my virtuous mother, and passionately loved my vicious father.

But enough for to-day. I have made a beginning, and there is no cause for me to feel anxious about the end, whatever it may be. My malady will attend to that.

March 21.

The weather is wonderful to-day. It is warm and bright; the sun is playing gaily on the slushy snow; everything is glittering, smoking, dripping; the sparrows are screaming like mad creatures around the dark, sweating hedges; the damp air irritates my chest sweetly but fright-

fully. The spring, the spring is coming! I am sitting by the window, and looking out across the little river to the fields. O Nature! Nature! I love thee so, but I came forth from thy womb unfitted even for life. Yonder is a male sparrow hopping about with outspread wings; he is screaming—and every sound of his voice, every ruffled feather on his tiny body breathes forth health and strength.

What is to be concluded from that? Nothing. He is healthy and has a right to scream and ruffle up his feathers; but I am ill and must die—that is all. It is not worth while to say any more about that. And tearful appeals to nature are comically absurd. Let us return to my story.

I grew up, as I have already said, badly and not cheerfully. I had no brothers or sisters. I was educated at home. And, indeed, what would my mother have had to occupy her if I had been sent off to boarding-school or to a government institute? That 's what children are for—to keep their parents from being bored. We lived chiefly in the country, and sometimes went to Moscow. I had governors and teachers, as is the custom. A cadaverous and tearful German, Riechmann, has remained particularly memorable to me,—a remarkably melancholy being, crippled by fate, who was fruitlessly consumed by an anguished longing for his native land. My man-nurse, Vasíly, nicknamed "The Goose," would

sit, unshaved, in his everlasting old coat of blue frieze, beside the stove in the frightfully stifling atmosphere of the close anteroom, impregnated through and through with the sour odour of old kvas,—would sit and play cards with the coachman, Potáp, who had just got a new sheepskin coat, white as snow, and invincible tarred boots,—while Riechmann would be singing on the other side of the partition:

"Herz, mein Herz, warum so traurig?
Was bekümmert dich so sehr?
'S ist ja schön im fremden Lande—
Herz, mein Herz, was willst du mehr?"

After my father's death, we definitively removed to Moscow. I was then twelve years of age. My father died during the night of a stroke of apoplexy. I shall never forget that night. I was sleeping soundly, as all children are in the habit of sleeping; but I remember, that even athwart my slumber I thought I heard a heavy, laboured breathing. Suddenly I felt some one seize me by the shoulder and shake me. I open my eyes: in front of me stands my man-nurse. —"What 's the matter?"—"Come along, come along, Alexyéi Mikhaílitch is dying. . . ." I fly out of the bed like a mad creature, and into the bedroom. I look: my father is lying with his head thrown back, all red in the face and rattling in his throat most painfully. The servants,

with frightened faces, throng the doors; in the anteroom some one inquires in a hoarse voice: "Has the doctor been sent for?" In the courtyard, a horse is being led out of the stable, the gate is creaking, a tallow candle is burning in the room on the floor; mamma is there also, overwhelmed, but without losing either her decorum or the consciousness of her own dignity. I flung myself on my father's breast, embraced him, and stammered out: "Papa, papa!" . . . He lay motionless and puckered up his eyes in a strange sort of way. I looked him in the face—unbearable horror stopped my breath; I squeaked with terror, like a roughly-grasped bird. They dragged me from him and carried me away. Only the night before, as though with a foreboding of his approaching death, he had caressed me so fervently and so sadly.

They brought a dishevelled and sleepy doctor, with a strong smell of lovage vodka. My father died under his lancet, and on the following day, thoroughly stupefied with grief, I stood with a candle in my hand in front of the table on which lay the corpse, and listened unheeding to the thick-voiced intoning of the chanter, occasionally broken by the feeble voice of the priest; tears kept streaming down my cheeks, over my lips, and my collar and my cuffs; I was consumed with tears, I stared fixedly at the motionless face of my father, as though I were expecting him to

do something; and my mother, meanwhile, slowly made reverences to the floor, slowly raised herself and, as she crossed herself, pressed her fingers strongly to her brow, her shoulders, and her body. There was not a single thought in my head; I had grown heavy all over, but I felt that something dreadful was taking place with me. . . . . It was then that Death looked into my face, and made a note of me.

We removed our residence to Moscow, after the death of my father, for a very simple reason: all our estate was sold under the hammer for debt, —positively everything, with the exception of one wretched little hamlet, the very one in which I am now finishing my magnificent existence. I confess that, in spite of the fact that I was young at the time, I grieved over the sale of our nest; that is to say, in reality, I grieved over our park only. With that park are bound up my sole bright memories. There, on one tranquil spring evening, I buried my best friend, an old dog with a bob tail and crooked paws—Trixie; there, hiding myself in the tall grass, I used to eat stolen apples, red, sweet Nóvgorod apples; there, in conclusion, I for the first time beheld through the bushes of ripe raspberries, Klaudia the maid, who, despite her snub nose, and her habit of laughing in her kerchief, aroused in me such a tender passion that in her presence I hardly breathed, felt like swooning, and was stricken

dumb. But one day, on the Bright Sunday,[1] when her turn came to kiss my lordly hand, I all but flung myself down and kissed her patched goatskin shoes. Great heavens! Can it be twenty years since all that happened? It does not seem so very long since I used to ride my shaggy, chestnut horse along the old wattled hedge of our park, and, rising in my stirrups, pluck the double-faced leaves of the poplars. While a man is living he is not conscious of his own life; like a sound, it becomes intelligible to him a little while afterward.

Oh, my park! Oh, my overgrown paths along the little pond! Oh, unhappy little spot beneath the decrepit dam, where I used to catch minnows and gudgeons! And you, ye lofty birch-trees, with long, pendulous branches, from behind which, from the country road, the melancholy song of the peasant used to be wafted, unevenly broken by the jolts of the rough cart—I send you my last farewells! . . . As I part with life I stretch out my hands to you alone. I should like once more to inhale the bitter freshness of the wormwood, the sweet scent of the reaped buckwheat in the fields of my natal spot; I should like once more to hear from afar the modest jangling of the cracked bell on our parish church; once more to lie in the cool shadow beneath the oak-bush on the slope of the famil-

[1] Easter.—Translator.

iar ravine; once more to follow with my eyes the moving trace of the wind, as it flew like a dark streak over the golden grass of our meadow. . . .

Ekh, to what end is all this? But I cannot go on to-day. Until to-morrow.

March 22.

To-day it is cold and overcast again. Such weather is far more suitable. It is in accord with my work. Yesterday quite unseasonably evoked in me a multitude of unnecessary feelings and memories. That will not be repeated. Emotional effusions are like liquorice-root: when you take your first suck at it, it does n't seem bad, but it leaves a very bad taste in your mouth afterward. I will simply and quietly narrate the story of my life.

So then, we went to live in Moscow. . . .

But it just occurs to me: is it really worth while to tell the story of my life?

No, decidedly it is not worth while. . . . My life is in no way different from the lives of a mass of other people. The parental home, the university, service in inferior positions, retirement, a small circle of acquaintances, downright poverty, modest pleasures, humble occupations, moderate desires—tell me, for mercy's sake, who does not know all that? And I, in particular, shall not tell the story of my life, be-

cause I am writing for my own pleasure; and if my past presents even to me nothing very cheerful, nor even very sorrowful, that means that there really can be nothing in it worthy of attention. I had better try to analyse my own character to myself.

What sort of a man am I? . . . Some one may remark to me that no one asks about that.—Agreed. But, you see, I am dying,—God is my witness, I am dying,—and really before death the desire to know what sort of a fellow I have been is pardonable, I think.

After having thoroughly pondered this important question, and having, moreover, no need to express myself bitterly on my own score, as do people who are strongly convinced of their merits, I must confess one thing: I have been an utterly superfluous man in this world, or, if you like to put it that way, an utterly useless bird. And I intend to prove that to-morrow, because to-day I am coughing like an aged sheep, and my nurse, Terèntievna, will give me no peace. "Lie down, dear little father mine," she says, "and drink your tea." . . . I know why she worries me: she wants some tea herself! Well! All right! Why not permit the poor old woman to extract, at the finish, all possible profit from her master? . . . The time for that has not yet gone by.

March 23.

WINTER again. The snow is falling in large flakes.

Superfluous, superfluous. . . . That 's a capital word I have devised. The more deeply I penetrate into myself, the more attentively I scrutinise the whole of my own past life, the more convinced do I become of the strict justice of that expression. Superfluous—precisely that. That word is not appropriate to other people. . . . People are bad, good, clever, stupid, agreeable, and disagreeable; but superfluous . . . . no. That is to say, understand me: the universe could dispense with these people also . . . . of course; but uselessness is not their chief quality, is not their distinguishing characteristic, and when you are speaking of them, the word " superfluous " is not the first one that comes to your tongue. But I . . . . of me nothing else could possibly be said: superfluous—that is all. Nature had not, evidently, calculated on my appearance, and in consequence of this, she treated me like an unexpected and unbidden guest. Not without cause did one wag, a great lover of Swedish whist, say of me, that my mother had discarded.[1] I speak of myself now calmly, without any gall. . . . . 'T is a thing of the past! During the whole course of my life I have constantly found

[1] A decidedly vulgar pun in the original.—TRANSLATOR.

my place occupied, possibly because I sought my place in the wrong direction. I was suspicious, bashful, irritable, like all invalids; moreover, probably owing to superfluous vanity,—or by reason of the deficient organisation of my person,—between my feelings and my thoughts and the expression of those feelings and thoughts there existed some senseless, incomprehensible and insuperable barrier; and when I made up my mind to overcome that impediment by force, to break down that barrier, my movements, the expression of my face, my entire being assumed the aspect of anguished tension: I not only seemed, but I actually became unnatural and affected. I was conscious of it myself and made haste to retire again into myself. Then a frightful tumult arose within me. I analysed myself to the last shred; I compared myself with other people; I recalled the smallest glances, the smiles, the words of the people before whom I would have liked to expand; I interpreted everything from its bad side, and laughed maliciously over my pretensions " to be like the rest of the world," —and suddenly, in the midst of my laughter, I sadly relaxed utterly, fell into foolish dejection, and then began the same thing all over again; in a word, I ran round like a squirrel in a wheel. Whole days passed in this torturing, fruitless toil. Come now, tell me, pray, to whom and for what is such a man of use? Why did

this happen with me, what was the cause of this minute fidgeting over myself—who knows? Who can say?

I remember, one day I was driving out of Moscow in the diligence. The road was good, but the postilion had hitched an extra trace-horse to the four-span. This unhappy, fifth, wholly unnecessary horse, fastened in rough fashion to the fore-end of a thick, short rope, which ruthlessly saws its haunches, rubs its tail, makes it run in the most unnatural manner, and imparts to its whole body the shape of a comma, always arouses my profound compassion. I remarked to the postilion that, apparently, the fifth horse might be dispensed with on that occasion. . . . . He remained silent awhile, shook the back of his neck, lashed the horse half a score of times in succession with his whip across its gaunt back and under its puffed-out belly—and said, not without a grin: "Well, you see, it has stuck itself on, that 's a fact! What the devil 's the use?"

And I, also, have stuck myself on. . . But the station is not far off, I think.

Superfluous. . . . I promised to prove the justice of my opinion, and I will fulfil my promise. I do not consider it necessary to mention a thousand details, daily occurrences and incidents, which, moreover, in the eyes of every thoughtful man might serve as incontrovertible proofs in my favour—that is to say, in favour

of my view; it is better for me to begin directly with one decidedly important event, after which, probably, no doubt will remain as to the accuracy of the word superfluous. I repeat: I have no intention of entering into details, but I cannot pass over in silence one decidedly curious and noteworthy circumstance,—namely, the strange manner in which my friends treated me (I also had friends) every time I chanced to meet them, or even dropped in to see them. They seemed to grow uneasy; as they came to meet me they either smiled in a not entirely natural manner, looked not at my eyes, not at my feet, as some people do, but chiefly at my cheeks, hastily ejaculated: "Ah! how do you do, Tchulkatúrin!" (Fate had favoured me with that name[1]) or, "Ah! so here 's Tchulkatúrin!" immediately stepped aside, went apart, and even remained for some time thereafter motionless, as though they were trying to recall something. I noticed all this, because I am not deficient in penetration and the gift of observation; on the whole, I am not stupid; decidedly amusing thoughts sometimes come into my head even, not at all ordinary thoughts; but, as I am a superfluous man with a dumbness inside me, I dread to express my thought, the more so, as I know beforehand that I shall express it very badly. It even seems strange to me, sometimes, that people can talk,

[1] Derived from *tchulók*, stocking.—Translator.

and so simply, so freely. . . . "What a calamity!!" you think. I am bound to say that my tongue pretty often itched, in spite of my dumbness; and I actually did utter words in my youth, but in riper years I succeeded in restraining myself almost every time. I would say to myself in an undertone: "See here, now, 't will be better for me to hold my tongue awhile," and I quieted down. We are all experts at holding our tongues; our women in particular have that capacity: one exalted young Russian lady maintains silence so vigorously that such a spectacle is capable of producing a slight shiver and cold perspiration even in a man who has been forewarned. But that is not the point, and it is not for me to criticise other people. I will proceed to the promised story.

Several years ago, thanks to a concurrence of trivial but, for me, very important circumstances, I chanced to pass six months in the county town of O***. This town is built entirely on a declivity. It has about eight hundred inhabitants, remarkably poor; the wretched little houses are outrageously bad; in the main street, under the guise of a pavement, formidable slabs of unhewn limestone crop out whitely here and there, in consequence of which, even the peasant-carts drive around it; in the very centre of an astonishingly untidy square rises a tiny yellowish structure with dark holes, and in the holes sit men in

large caps with visors, and pretend to be engaged in trade; there, also, rears itself aloft a remarkably tall, striped pole, and beside the pole, by way of order, at the command of the authorities, a load of yellow hay is kept, and one governmental hen stalks about. In a word, in the town of O*** existence is excellent.

During the early days of my sojourn in that town I nearly went out of my mind with ennui. I must say of myself that, although I am a superfluous man, of course, yet it is not of my own will; I am sickly myself, but I cannot endure anything sickly. . . . I would have no objections to happiness, I have even tried to approach it from the right and from the left. . . . And, therefore, it is not surprising that I can also feel bored, like any other mortal. I found myself in the town of O*** on business connected with the Government service. . . .

Teréntievna is absolutely determined to kill me. Here is a specimen of our conversation:

Teréntievna. O-okh, dear little father! why do you keep writing? It is n't healthy for you to write.

I. But I 'm bored, Teréntievna.

She. But do drink some tea and lie down.

I. But I don't feel sleepy.

She. Akh, dear little father! Why do you say that? The Lord be with you! Lie down now, lie down: it 's better for you.

I. I shall die anyway, Teréntievna.

She. The Lord forbid and have mercy! . . . Well, now, do you order me to make tea?

I. I shall not survive this week, Teréntievna.

She. Ii-i, dear little father! Why do you say that? . . . So I 'll go and prepare the samovár.

Oh, decrepit, yellow, toothless creature! Is it possible that to you I am not a man!

March 24. A hard frost.

On the very day of my arrival in the town of O***, the above-mentioned governmental business caused me to call on a certain Ozhógin, Kiríll Matvyéevitch, one of the chief officials of the county; but I made acquaintance with him, or, as the saying is, got intimate with him, two weeks later. His house was situated on the principal street, and was distinguished from all the rest by its size, its painted roof, and two lions on the gate, belonging to that race of lions which bear a remarkable likeness to the unsuccessful dogs whose birthplace is Moscow. It is possible to deduce from these lions alone that Ozhógin was an opulent man. And, in fact, he owned four hundred souls of serfs;[1] he received at his house the best society of the town of O***, and bore the reputation of being a hospitable man. The

[1] Meaning male serfs. The women and children were not reckoned.—Translator.

chief of police came to him, in a broad carroty-hued drozhky drawn by a pair of horses—a remarkably large man, who seemed to have been carved out of shop-worn material. Other officials visited him also: the pettifogger, a yellowish and rather malicious creature; the waggish surveyor, of German extraction, with a Tatár face; the officer of Ways of Communication, a tender soul, a singer, but a scandal-monger; a former county Marshal of Nobility, a gentleman with dyed hair, and rumpled cuffs, trousers with straps, and that extremely noble expression of countenance which is so characteristic of people who have been under trial by the courts. He was visited also by two landed proprietors, inseparable friends, both no longer young, and even threadbare with age, the younger of whom was constantly squelching the elder, and shutting his mouth with one and the same reproach: "Come, that will do, Sergyéi Sergyéitch! What do you know about it? For you write the word *próbka* [cork] with the letter *b*. . . . Yes, gentlemen," —he was wont to continue, with all the heat of conviction, addressing those present:—"Sergyéi Sergyéitch writes not *próbka,* but *bróbka.*" And all present laughed, although, probably, not one of them was particularly distinguished for his skill in orthography; and the unhappy Sergyéi Sergyéitch held his peace, and bowed his head with a pacific smile. But I am forgetting that my days are numbered, and am entering

into too great detail. So then, without further circumlocution: Ozhógin was married and had a daughter, Elizavéta Kiríllovna, and I fell in love with that daughter.

Ozhógin himself was a commonplace man, neither good nor bad; his wife was beginning to look a good deal like an aged hen; but their daughter did not take after her parents. She was very comely, of vivacious and gentle disposition. Her bright grey eyes gazed good-naturedly, and in a straightforward manner from beneath childishly-arched brows; she smiled almost constantly, and laughed also quite frequently. Her fresh voice had a very pleasant ring; she moved easily, swiftly, and blushed gaily. She did not dress very elegantly; extremely simple gowns suited her best.

As a rule, I have never made acquaintance quickly, and if I have felt at ease with a person on first meeting,—which, however, has almost never been the case,—I confess that that has spoken strongly in favour of the new acquaintance. I have not known how to behave to women at all, and in their presence I either frowned and assumed a fierce expression, or displayed my teeth in a grin in the stupidest way, and twisted my tongue about in my mouth with embarrassment. With Elizavéta Kiríllovna, on the contrary, I felt myself at home from the very first moment. This is how it came about. One

day I arrive at Ozhógin's before dinner, and ask: "Is he at home?" I am told: "Yes, and he is dressing; please come into the hall."[1] I go into the hall; I see a young girl in a white gown standing by the window, with her back toward me, and holding a cage in her hands. I curl up a little, according to my habit; but, nevertheless, I cough out of propriety. The young girl turns round quickly, so quickly that her curls strike her in the face, catches sight of me, bows, and with a smile shows me a little box, half-filled with seed.

"Will you excuse me?"

Of course, as is customary in such circumstances, I first bent my head, and, at the same time, crooked and straightened my knees (as though some one had hit me from behind in the back of my legs, which, as everybody knows, serves as a token of excellent breeding and agreeable ease of manner), and then smiled, raised my hand, and waved it twice cautiously and gently in the air. The girl immediately turned away from me, took from the cage a small board, and began to scrape it violently with a knife, and suddenly, without changing her attitude, gave utterance to the following words:

"This is papa's bull-finch. . . . Do you like bull-finches?"

[1] The large music-room, also used for dancing, as a play-room for the children in winter, and so forth, in Russian houses.—Translator.

"I prefer canary-birds,"—I replied, not without a certain effort.

"And I am fond of canary-birds also; but just look at him, see how pretty he is. See, he is not afraid."—What surprised me was that I was not afraid.—"Come closer. His name is Pópka."

I went up, and bent over.

"He 's very charming, is n't he?"

She turned her face toward me; but we were standing so close to each other that she was obliged to throw her head back a little, in order to look at me with her bright eyes. I gazed at her: the whole of her rosy young face was smiling in so friendly a manner that I smiled also, and almost laughed aloud with pleasure. The door opened; Mr. Ozhógin entered. I immediately went to him, and began to talk with him in a very unembarrassed way; I do not know myself how I came to stay to dinner; I sat out the whole evening, and on the following day, Ozhógin's lackey, a long, purblind fellow, was already smiling at me, as a friend of the house, as he pulled off my overcoat.

To find a refuge, to weave for myself even a temporary nest, to know the joy of daily relations and habits,—that was a happiness which I, a superfluous man, without domestic memories, had not experienced up to that time. If there were anything about me suggestive of a flower, and if that comparison were not so threadbare, I

would decide to say that, from that hour, I began to blossom out in spirit. Everything in me and round about me underwent such an instantaneous change! My whole life was illuminated by love, —literally my whole life, down to the smallest details,—like a dark, deserted chamber into which a candle has been brought. I lay down to sleep and I rose up, dressed myself, breakfasted, and smoked my pipe in a way different from my habit; I even skipped as I walked,—really I did, as though wings had suddenly sprouted on my shoulders. I remember that I was not in doubt even for a minute, as to the feeling with which Elizavéta Kiríllovna had inspired me; and from the very first day, I fell in love with her passionately, and from the very first day, too, I knew that I was in love. I saw her every day for the space of three weeks. Those three weeks were the happiest time of my life; but the remembrance of them is painful to me. I cannot think of them alone: that which followed them involuntarily rises up before me, and venomous grief slowly grips the heart which had just grown soft.

When a man is feeling very well, his brain, as every one knows, acts very little. A calm and joyous feeling, a feeling of satisfaction, permeates his whole being; he is swallowed up in it; the consciousness of individuality vanishes in him—he is in a state of bliss, as badly educated poets say. But when, at last, that " spell " passes

off, a man sometimes feels vexed and regretful that, in the midst of happiness, he was so unobservant of himself that he did not redouble his thoughts, his reflections, and his memories, that he did not prolong his enjoyment . . . . as though a "blissful" man had any time, and as though it were worth while to reflect about his own emotions! The happy man is like a fly in the sunshine. That is why, when I recall those three weeks, I find it almost impossible to retain in my mind an accurate, definite impression, the more so, as in the whole course of that time, nothing of particular note took place between us. . . . . Those twenty days present themselves to me as something warm, young, and fragrant, as a sort of bright streak in my dim and grey-hued life. My memory suddenly becomes implacably faithful and clear, only dating from the moment when the blows of Fate descended upon me, speaking again in the words of those same ill-bred writers.

Yes, those three weeks. . . . However, they did not precisely leave no images behind in me. Sometimes, when I happen to think long of that time, certain memories suddenly float forth from the gloom of the past—as the stars unexpectedly start forth in the evening sky to meet attentively-riveted eyes. Especially memorable to me is one stroll in a grove outside the town. There were four of us: old Madame Ozhógin, Liza, I,

and a certain Bizmyónkoff, a petty official of the town of O***, a fair-haired, good-natured, and meek young man. I shall have occasion to allude to him again. Mr. Ozhógin remained at home: his head ached, in consequence of his having slept too long. The day was splendid, warm, and calm. I must remark that gardens of entertainment and public amusement are not to the taste of the Russian. In governmental towns, in the so-called Public Gardens, you will never encounter a living soul at any season of the year; possibly some old woman will seat herself, grunting, on a green bench baked through and through by the sun, in the neighbourhood of a sickly tree, and that only when there is no dirty little shop close to the gate. But if there is a sparse little birch-grove in the vicinity of the town, the merchants, and sometimes the officials, will gladly go thither on Sundays and feast-days, with their samovár, patties, water-melons, and set out all those good gifts on the dusty grass, right by the side of the road, seat themselves around, and eat and drink tea in the sweat of their brows until the very evening. Precisely that sort of small grove existed then two versts distant from the town of O***. We went thither after dinner, drank tea in due form, and then all four of us set off for a stroll through the grove. Bizmyónkoff gave his arm to old Madame Ozhógin; I gave mine to Liza. The day was already inclining

toward evening. I was then in the very ardour of first love (not more than a fortnight had elapsed since we had become acquainted), in that condition of passionate and attentive adoration, when your whole soul innocently and involuntarily follows every motion of the beloved being; when you cannot satiate yourself with its presence, or hear enough of its voice; when you smile and look like a convalescent child, and any man of a little experience must see at the first glance, a hundred paces off, what is going on in you.

Up to that day, I had not once chanced to be arm in arm with Liza. I walked by her side, treading softly on the green grass. A light breeze seemed to be fluttering around us, between the white boles of the birch-trees, now and then blowing the ribbon of her hat in my face. With an importunate gaze I watched her, until, at last, she turned gaily to me, and we smiled at each other. The birds chirped approvingly overhead, the blue sky peered caressingly through the fine foliage. My head reeled with excess of pleasure. I hasten to remark that Liza was not in the least in love with me. She liked me; in general, she was not shy of any one, but I was not fated to disturb her childish tranquillity. She walked arm in arm with me, as with a brother. She was seventeen years old at the time. . . . And yet, that same evening, in my presence, there began in her that quiet, inward fermentation, which

precedes the conversion of a child into a woman. . . . . I was witness to that change of the whole being, that innocent perplexity, that tremulous pensiveness; I was the first to note that sudden softness of glance, that ringing uncertainty of voice—and, oh, stupid fool! oh, superfluous man! for a whole week I was not ashamed to assume that I, I was the cause of that change!

This is the way it happened.

We strolled for quite a long time, until evening, and chatted very little. I held my peace, like all inexperienced lovers, and she, in all probability, had nothing to say to me; but she seemed to be meditating about something, and shook her head in a queer sort of way, pensively nibbling at a leaf which she had plucked. Sometimes she began to stride forward in such a decided way . . . and then suddenly halted, waited for me and gazed about her with eyebrows elevated and an absent-minded smile. On the preceding evening, we had read together "The Prisoner of the Caucasus."[1] With what eagerness had she listened to me, with her face propped on both hands, and her bosom resting against the table! I tried to talk about our reading of the evening before; she blushed, asked me whether I had given the bull-finch any hemp-seed before we started, began to sing loudly some song, then suddenly ceased. The grove ended on one side in a rather

[1] By M. Y. Lérmontoff.

steep and lofty cliff; below flowed a small, meandering river, and beyond it, further than the eye could see, stretched endless meadows, now swelling slightly like waves, now spreading out like a table-cloth, here and there intersected with ravines. Liza and I were the first to emerge on the edge of the grove; Bizmyónkoff remained behind with the old lady. We came out, halted, and both of us involuntarily narrowed our eyes: directly opposite us, in the midst of the red-hot mist, the sun was setting, huge and crimson. Half the sky was aglow and flaming; the red rays beat aslant across the meadows, casting a scarlet reflection even on the shady side of the ravine, and lay like fiery lead upon the river, where it was not hidden under overhanging bushes, and seemed to be reposing in the lap of the ravine and the grove. We stood there drenched in the blazing radiance. It is beyond my power to impart all the passionate solemnity of that picture. They say that the colour red appeared to one blind man like the sound of a trumpet; I do not know to what degree that comparison is just; but, actually, there was something challenging in that flaming gold of the evening air, in the crimson glow of sky and earth. I cried out with rapture, and immediately turned to Liza. She was gazing straight at the sun. I remember, the glare of the sunset was reflected in her eyes in tiny, flaming spots. She was startled, profoundly moved. She made no

answer to my exclamation, did not stir for a long time, and hung her head. . . . I stretched out my hand to her; she turned away from me, and suddenly burst into tears. I gazed at her with secret, almost joyful surprise. . . . Bizmyónkoff's voice rang out a couple of paces from us. Liza hastily wiped her eyes, and with a wavering smile looked at me. The old lady emerged from the grove, leaning on the arm of her fair-haired escort; both of them, in their turn, admired the view. The old lady asked Liza some question, and I remember that I involuntarily shivered when, in reply, her daughter's broken voice, like cracked glass, resounded in reply. In the meanwhile, the sun had set, the glow was beginning to die out. We retraced our steps. I again gave Liza my arm. It was still light in the grove, and I could clearly discern her features. She was embarrassed, and did not raise her eyes. The flush which had spread all over her face did not disappear; she seemed still to be standing in the rays of the setting sun. . . . Her arm barely touched mine. For a long time I could not start a conversation, so violently was my heart beating. We caught glimpses of the carriage far away, through the trees; the coachman was driving to meet us at a foot-pace over the friable sand of the road.

"Lizavéta Kiríllovna,"—I said at last,—"why did you weep?"

"I don't know,"—she answered after a brief

pause, looking at me with her gentle eyes, still wet with tears,—their glance seemed to me to have undergone a change,—and again fell silent.

"I see that you love nature . . . ." I went on.—That was not in the least what I had meant to say, and my tongue hardly stammered out the last phrase to the end. She shook her head. I could not utter a word more. . . . I was waiting for something . . . . not a confession—no, indeed! I was waiting for a confiding glance, a question. . . . But Liza stared at the ground and held her peace. I repeated once more, in an undertone: "Why?" and received no reply. She was embarrassed, almost ashamed, I saw that.

A quarter of an hour later, we were all seated in the carriage and driving toward the town. The horses advanced at a brisk trot; we dashed swiftly through the moist, darkening air. I suddenly began to talk, incessantly addressing myself now to Bizmyónkoff, now to Madame Ozhógin. I did not look at Liza, but I could not avoid perceiving that from the corner of the carriage her gaze never once rested on me. At home she recovered with a start, but would not read with me, and soon went off to bed. The break—that break of which I have spoken—had been effected in her. She had ceased to be a little girl; she was already beginning to expect . . . like myself . . . . something or other. She did not have to wait long.

But that night I returned to my lodgings in a state of utter enchantment. The confused something, which was not exactly a foreboding, nor yet exactly a suspicion, that had arisen within me vanished: I ascribed the sudden constraint in Liza's behaviour toward me to maidenly modesty, to timidity. . . . Had not I read a thousand times in many compositions, that the first appearance of love agitates and alarms a young girl? I felt myself very happy, and already began to construct various plans in my own mind. . . .

If any one had then whispered in my ear: "Thou liest, my dear fellow! that 's not in store for thee at all, my lad! thou art doomed to die alone in a miserable little house, to the intolerable grumbling of an old peasant-woman, who can hardly wait for thy death, in order that she may sell thy boots for a song. . . ."

Yes, one involuntarily says, with the Russian philosopher: "How is one to know what he does not know?"—Until to-morrow.

March 25. A white winter day.

I HAVE read over what I wrote yesterday, and came near tearing up the whole note-book. It seems to me that my style of narrative is too protracted and too mawkish. However, as my remaining memories of that period present nothing cheerful, save the joy of that peculiar

nature which Lérmontoff had in view when he said that it is a cheerful and a painful thing to touch the ulcers of ancient wounds, then why should not I observe myself? But I must not impose upon kindness. Therefore I will continue without mawkishness.

For the space of a whole week, after that stroll outside the town, my position did not improve in the least, although the change in Liza became more perceptible every day. As I have already stated, I interpreted this change in the most favourable possible light for myself. . . . The misfortune of solitary and timid men—those who are timid through self-love—consists precisely in this—that they, having eyes, and even keeping them staring wide open, see nothing, or see it in a false light, as though through coloured glasses. And their own thoughts and observations hinder them at every step.

In the beginning of our acquaintance Liza had treated me trustingly and frankly, like a child; perhaps, even, in her liking for me there was something of simple, childish affection. . . . But when that strange, almost sudden crisis took place in her, after a short perplexity, she felt herself embarrassed in my presence, she turned away from me involuntarily, and at the same time grew sad and pensive. . . . She was expecting . . . . what? She herself did not know . . . . but I . . . . I, as I have already said, rejoiced

at that crisis. . . . As God is my witness, I almost swooned with rapture, as the saying is. However, I am willing to admit that any one else in my place might have been deceived also. . . . Who is devoid of self-love? It is unnecessary to say that all this became clear to me only after a time, when I was compelled to fold my injured wings, which were not any too strong at best.

The misunderstanding which arose between Liza and me lasted for a whole week,—and there is nothing surprising about that: it has been my lot to be a witness of misunderstandings which have lasted for years and years. And who was it that said that only the true is real? A lie is as tenacious of life as is the truth, if not more so. It is a fact, I remember, that even during that week I had a pang now and then . . . . but a lonely man like myself, I will say once more, is as incapable of understanding what is going on within him as he is of comprehending what is going on before his eyes. Yes, and more than that: is love a natural feeling? Is it natural to a man to love? Love is a malady; and for a malady the law is not written. Suppose my heart did contract unpleasantly within me at times; but, then, everything in me was turned upside down. How is a man to know under such circumstances what is right and what is wrong, what is the cause, what is the significance of every separate sensation?

But, be that as it may, all these misunderstandings, forebodings, and hopes were resolved in the following manner.

One day,—it was in the morning, about eleven o'clock,—before I had contrived to set my foot in Mr. Ozhógin's anteroom, an unfamiliar, ringing voice resounded in the hall, the door flew open, and, accompanied by the master of the house, there appeared on the threshold a tall, stately man of five-and-twenty, who hastily threw on his military cloak, which was lying on the bench, took an affectionate leave of Kiríll Matvyéevitch, touched his cap negligently as he passed me—and vanished, clinking his spurs.

"Who is that?"—I asked Ozhógin.

"Prince N***,"—replied the latter, with a troubled face;—"he has been sent from Petersburg to receive the recruits. But where are those servants?"—he went on with vexation:—"there was no one to put on his cloak."

We entered the hall.

"Has he been here long?"—I inquired.

"They say he came yesterday evening. I offered him a room in my house, but he declined it. However, he seems to be a very nice young fellow."

"Did he stay long with you?"

"About an hour. He asked me to introduce him to Olympiáda Nikítichna."

"And did you introduce him?"

"Certainly."

"And did he make acquaintance with Lizavéta Kiríllovna? . . . ."

"Yes, he made her acquaintance, of course."

I said nothing for a while.

"Has he come to remain long, do you know?"

"Yes, I think he will be obliged to stay here more than a fortnight."

And Kiríll Matvyéevitch ran off to dress.

I paced up and down the hall several times. I do not remember that Prince N***'s arrival produced any special impression on me at the time, except that unpleasant sensation which usually takes possession of us at the appearance of a new face in our domestic circle. Perhaps that feeling was mingled with something in the nature of envy of the timid and obscure Moscow man for the brilliant officer from Petersburg.—"The Prince,"—I thought,—"is a dandy of the capital; he will look down on us." . . . I had not seen him for more than a minute, but I had managed to note that he was handsome, alert, and easy-mannered.

After pacing the hall for a while, I came to a halt, at last, in front of a mirror, pulled from my pocket a tiny comb, imparted to my hair a picturesque disorder and, as sometimes happens, suddenly became engrossed in the contemplation of my own visage. I remember that my attention was concentrated with particular solicitude on

my nose; the rather flabby and undefined outline of that feature was affording me no special gratification—when, all of a sudden, in the dark depths of the inclined glass, which reflected almost the entire room, the door opened, and the graceful figure of Liza made its appearance. I do not know why I did not stir and kept the same expression on my face. Liza craned her head forward, gazed attentively at me and, elevating her eyebrows, biting her lips, and holding her breath, like a person who is delighted that he has not been seen, cautiously retreated, and softly drew the door to after her. The door creaked faintly. Liza shuddered, and stood stock-still on the spot. . . . I did not move. . . . Again she pulled at the door-handle, and disappeared. There was no possibility of doubt: the expression of Liza's face at the sight of my person denoted nothing except a desire to beat a successful retreat, to avoid an unpleasant meeting; the swift gleam of pleasure which I succeeded in detecting in her eyes, when she thought that she really had succeeded in escaping unperceived,—all that said but too clearly: that young girl was not in love with me. For a long, long time I could not withdraw my gaze from the motionless, dumb door, which again presented itself as a white spot in the depths of the mirror; I tried to smile at my own upright figure—hung my head, returned home, and flung myself on the divan. I felt re-

markably heavy at heart, so heavy that I could not weep . . . . and what was there to weep about? . . . . "Can it be?"—I kept reiterating incessantly, as I lay, like a dead man, on my back, and with my hands folded on my breast:—"Can it be?" . . . . How do you like that "Can it be?"

March 26. A thaw.

When, on the following day, after long hesitation and inward quailing, I entered the familiar drawing-room of the Ozhógins', I was no longer the same man whom they had known for the space of three weeks. All my former habits, from which I had begun to wean myself under the influence of an emotion which was new to me, had suddenly made their appearance again, and taken entire possession of me like the owners returning to their house.

People like myself are generally guided not so much by positive facts, as by their own impressions; I, who, no longer ago than the previous evening, had been dreaming of "the raptures of mutual love," to-day cherished not the slightest doubt as to my own "unhappiness," and was in utter despair, although I myself was not able to discover any reasonable pretext for my despair. I could not be jealous of Prince N***, and whatever merits he might possess, his mere arrival was not sufficient instantly to extirpate

Liza's inclination for me. . . . But stay!—did that inclination exist? I recalled the past. "And the stroll in the forest?" I asked myself. "And the expression of her face in the mirror?"—"But," I went on,—"the stroll in the forest, apparently. . . . Phew, good heavens! What an insignificant being I am!" I exclaimed aloud, at last. This is a specimen of the half-expressed, half-thought ideas which, returning a thousand times, revolved in a monotonous whirlwind in my head. I repeat,—I returned to the Ozhógins' the same mistrustful, suspicious, constrained person that I had been from my childhood. . . .

I found the whole family in the drawing-room; Bizmyónkoff was sitting there also, in one corner. All appeared to be in high spirits: Ozhógin, in particular, was fairly beaming, and his first words were to communicate to me that Prince N*** had spent the whole of the preceding evening with them.—"Well," I said to myself, "now I understand why you are in such good humour." I must confess that the Prince's second call puzzled me. I had not expected that. Generally speaking, people like me expect everything in the world except that which ought to happen in the ordinary run of things. I sulked and assumed the aspect of a wounded, but magnanimous man; I wanted to punish Liza for her ungraciousness; from which, moreover, it must be concluded, that, nevertheless, I was not yet in

utter despair. They say, in some cases when you are really beloved, it is even advantageous to torture the adored object; but in my position, it was unutterably stupid. Liza, in the most innocent manner, paid no attention whatever to me. Only old Madame Ozhógin noticed my solemn taciturnity, and anxiously inquired after my health. Of course I answered her with a bitter smile that "I was perfectly well, thank God." Ozhógin continued to dilate on the subject of his visitor; but, observing that I answered him reluctantly, he addressed himself chiefly to Bizmyónkoff, who was listening to him with great attention, when a footman entered and announced Prince N***. The master of the house instantly sprang to his feet, and rushed forth to welcome him! Liza, on whom I immediately darted an eagle glance, blushed with pleasure, and fidgeted about on her chair. The Prince entered, perfumed, gay, amiable. . . .

As I am not composing a novel for the indulgent reader, but simply writing for my own pleasure, there is no necessity for my having recourse to the customary devices of the literary gentlemen. So I will say at once, without further procrastination, that Liza, from the very first day, fell passionately in love with the Prince, and the Prince fell in love with her—partly for the lack of anything to do, but also partly because Liza really was a very charming creature. There

was nothing remarkable in the fact that they fell in love with each other. He, in all probability, had not in the least expected to find such a pearl in such a wretched shell (I am speaking of the God-forsaken town of O***), and she, up to that time, had never beheld, even in her dreams, anything in the least like this brilliant, clever, fascinating aristocrat.

After the preliminary greetings, Ozhógin introduced me to the Prince, who treated me very politely. As a rule, he was polite to every one, and despite the incommensurable distance which existed between him and our obscure rural circle, he understood not only how to avoid embarrassing any one, but even to have the appearance of being our equal, and of only happening to live in St. Petersburg.

That first evening. . . . Oh, that first evening! In the happy days of our childhood, our teachers used to narrate to us and hold up to us as an example of manly fortitude the young Lacedæmonian who, having stolen a fox and hidden it under his cloak, never once uttered a sound, but permitted the animal to devour all his entrails, and thus preferred death to dishonour. . . . I can find no better expression of my unutterable sufferings in the course of that evening, when, for the first time, I beheld the Prince by Liza's side. My persistent, constrained smile, my anguished attention, my stupid taciturnity, my pain-

ful and vain longing to depart, all this, in all probability, was extremely noticeable in its way. Not one fox alone was ravaging my vitals—jealousy, envy, the consciousness of my own insignificance, and impotent rage were rending me. I could not but admit that the Prince was really a very amiable young man. . . . I devoured him with my eyes; I really believe that I forgot to wink as I gazed at him. He did not chat with Liza exclusively, but, of course, he talked for her alone. I must have bored him extremely. . . . . He probably soon divined that he had to do with a discarded lover, but, out of compassion for me, and also from a profound sense of my perfect harmlessness, he treated me with extraordinary gentleness. You can imagine how that hurt me!

I remember that, in the course of the evening, I tried to efface my fault; I (do not laugh at me, whoever you may be under whose eyes these lines may chance to fall, especially as this was my final dream) . . . . I suddenly took it into my head, God is my witness, among the varied torments, that Liza was trying to punish me for my arrogant coldness at the beginning of my visit; that she was angry with me, and was flirting with the Prince merely out of vexation at me. I seized a convenient opportunity, and approaching her with a meek but caressing smile, I murmured: "Enough, forgive me . . . however, I

do not ask it because I am afraid "—and without awaiting her answer, I suddenly imparted to my face an unusually vivacious and easy expression, gave a wry laugh, threw my hand up over my head in the direction of the ceiling (I remember that I was trying to adjust my neckcloth), and was even on the point of wheeling round on one foot, as much as to say: "All is over, I 'm in fine spirits, let every one be in fine spirits!" but I did not wheel round, nevertheless, because I was afraid of falling, owing to an unnatural stiffness in my knees. . . Liza did not understand me in the least, looked into my face with surprise, smiled hurriedly, as though desirous of getting rid of me as promptly as possible, and again approached the Prince. Blind and deaf as I was, I could not but inwardly admit that she was not at all angry nor vexed with me at that moment; she simply was not thinking about me. The blow was decisive, my last hopes crumbled to ruin with a crash—as a block of ice penetrated with the spring sun suddenly crumbles into tiny fragments. I had received a blow on the head at the first assault, and, like the Prussians at Jena, in one day I lost everything. No, she was not angry with me! . . .

Alas! on the contrary! She herself—I could see that—was being undermined, as with a billow. Like a young sapling, which has already half deserted the bank, she bent eagerly forward

over the flood, ready to surrender to it both the first blossoming of her spring, and her whole life. Any one to whose lot it has fallen to be a witness to such an infatuation has lived through bitter moments, if he himself loved and was not beloved. I shall forever remember the devouring attention, the tender gaiety, the innocent self-forgetfulness, the glance, half-childish and already womanly, the happy smile which blossomed forth, as it were, and never left the half-parted lips and the blushing cheeks. . . . Everything of which Liza had had a dim foreboding during our stroll in the grove had now come to pass—and she, surrendering herself wholly to love, had, at the same time, grown quiet and sparkling like young wine which has ceased to ferment, because its time has come. . . .

I had the patience to sit out that first evening, and the evenings which followed . . . . all, to the very end! I could cherish no hope whatsoever. Liza and the Prince grew more and more attached to each other with every day that passed. . . . . But I positively lost all sense of my own dignity, and could not tear myself away from the spectacle of my unhappiness. I remember that one day I made an effort not to go, gave myself my word of honour in the morning that I would remain at home,—and at eight o'clock in the evening (I usually went out at seven), I jumped up like a lunatic,

put on my hat, and ran, panting, to Kiríll Matvyéevitch's.

My position was extremely awkward; I maintained obdurate silence, and sometimes for days at a stretch never uttered a sound. I have never been distinguished for eloquence, as I have already said; but now every bit of sense I had seemed to fly away in the presence of the Prince, and I remained as poor as a church mouse. Moreover, in private, I forced my unhappy brain to toil to such a degree, slowly pondering over everything I had marked or noted in the course of the preceding day, that when I returned to the Ozhógins', I hardly had enough strength left to continue my observations. They spared me as they would a sick man, I saw that. Every morning I reached a fresh, definitive decision, which had chiefly been hatched out during a sleepless night. Now I prepared to have an explanation with Liza, to give her some friendly advice . . . but when I happened to be alone with her, my tongue suddenly ceased to act, as though it had congealed, and we both painfully awaited the appearance of a third person; then, again, I wanted to flee, for good and all, leaving behind me, for the object of my affections of course, a letter filled with reproaches; and one day I set about that letter, but the sense of justice had not yet quite vanished from within me; I understood that I had no right to upbraid any one for

anything, and flung my note into the fire; again I suddenly offered the whole of myself as a sacrifice, in magnanimous fashion, and gave Liza my blessing, wishing her happiness in her love, and smiled in a gentle and friendly way on the Prince from a corner. But the hard-hearted lovers not only did not thank me for my sacrifice, they did not even perceive it, and evidently stood in no need either of my blessings or of my smiles. . . . Then, with vexation, I suddenly passed over into the diametrically opposite frame of mind. I promised myself, as I swathed myself in my cloak, Spanish fashion, to cut the lucky rival's throat from round a corner, and with the joy of a wild beast, I pictured to myself Liza's despair. . . . But, in the first place, in the town of O*** there were very few such corners, and, in the second place, a board fence, a street-lantern, a policeman in the distance. . . . No! at such a corner as that it would be more seemly to peddle rings of bread than to shed human blood. I must confess that, among other means of deliverance,—as I very indefinitely expressed it when holding a conference with myself,—I thought of appealing straight to Mr. Ozhógin . . . . of directing the attention of that nobleman to the dangerous position of his daughter, to the sad consequences of her frivolity. . . . I even began to talk with him one day on the very ticklish subject, but framed my speech so craftily

and obscurely, that he listened and listened to me, and suddenly, as though awaking from sleep, swiftly rubbed the palm of his hand all over his face, not sparing even his nose, snorted, and walked away from me.

It is needless to say that, on adopting that decision, I assured myself that I was acting from the most disinterested motives, that I was desirous of the universal welfare, that I was fulfilling the duty of a friend of the family. . . . But I venture to think that even if Kiríll Matvyéevitch had not cut short my effusions, I should still have lacked the courage to finish my monologue. I sometimes undertook, with the pompousness of an ancient sage, to weigh the Prince's merits; I sometimes comforted myself with the hope that it was merely a passing fancy, that Liza would come to her senses, that her love was not genuine love. . . . Oh, no! In a word, I do not know of a thought over which I did not brood at that time. One remedy alone, I frankly confess, never entered my head; namely, it never once occurred to me to commit suicide. Why that did not occur to me, I do not know. . . . Perhaps even then I had a foreboding that I had not long to live in any case.

It is easy to understand that, under such untoward conditions, my conduct, my behaviour toward other people, was more characterised by unnaturalness and constraint than ever. Even old

lady Ozhógin—that dull-witted being—began tc shun me, and at times did not know from which side to approach me. Bizmyónkoff, always courteous and ready to be of service, avoided me. It also seemed to me then that in him I had a fellow-sufferer, that he also loved Liza. But he never replied to my hints, and, in general, talked to me with reluctance. The Prince behaved in a very friendly manner to him; I may say that the Prince respected him. Neither Bizmyónkoff nor I interfered with the Prince and Liza; but he did not shun them as I did, he did not look like a wolf nor like a victim—and gladly joined them whenever they wished it. He did not distinguish himself particularly by jocularity on such occasions, it is true; but even in times past there had been a quiet element in his mirth.

In this manner about two weeks passed. The Prince was not only good-looking and clever: he played on the piano, sang, drew very respectably, and knew how to narrate well. His anecdotes, drawn from the highest circles of society in the capital, always produced a strong impression on the hearers, which was all the more powerful because he himself did not seem to attribute any particular importance to them. . . .

The consequence of this guile, if you choose to call it so, on the Prince's part was, that in the course of his brief sojourn in the town of O*** he absolutely bewitched the whole of society there.

It is always very easy for a man from the highest circles to bewitch us steppe-dwellers. The Prince's frequent calls on the Ozhógins (he spent his evenings at their house), as a matter of course, aroused the envy of the other nobles and officials; but the Prince, being a man of the world and clever, did not neglect a single one of them, called on all of them, said at least one pleasant word to all the dames and young ladies, permitted himself to be stuffed with laboriously-heavy viands and treated to vile wines with magnificent appellations; in a word, behaved himself admirably, cautiously, and cleverly. Prince N*** was, altogether, a man of cheerful disposition, sociable, amiable by inclination, and as a matter of calculation also: how was it possible for him to be otherwise than a complete success in every way?

From the time of his arrival, every one in the house had thought that the time flew by with remarkable swiftness; everything went splendidly; old Ozhógin, although he pretended not to notice anything, was, in all probability, secretly rubbing his hands at the thought of having such a son-in-law. The Prince himself was conducting the whole affair very quietly and decorously, when, all of a sudden, an unforeseen event . . . .

Until to-morrow. To-day I am weary. These reminiscences chafe me, even on the brink of the grave. Teréntievna thought to-day that my nose

had grown even more pointed; and that 's a bad sign, they say.

March 27. The thaw continues.

Matters were in the above-described condition: the Prince and Liza loved each other, the elder Ozhógins were waiting to see what would happen; Bizmyónkoff was present also—nothing else could be said of him; I was flopping like a fish on the ice, and keeping watch to the best of my ability,—I remember that at that time I appointed to myself the task of at least not allowing Liza to perish in the snare of the seducer, and in consequence thereof, I had begun to pay particular attention to the maid-servants and the fatal "back" entrance—although, on the other hand, I sometimes dreamed for whole nights together about the touching magnanimity with which, in the course of time, I would extend my hand to the deluded victim and say to her: "The wily man has betrayed thee; but I am thy faithful friend. . . . let us forget the past and be happy!"—when, suddenly, a joyful piece of news was disseminated throughout the town: the Marshal of Nobility for the county intended to give a large ball in honour of the respected visitor, at his own estate Gornostáevka, also called Gubnyakóva. All the hierarchies and powers of the town of O*** received invitations, beginning with the chief of police and ending with the

apothecary, a remarkably pimple-faced German, with cruel pretensions to the ability to speak Russian purely, in consequence of which, he was constantly using violent expressions with absolute inappropriateness, as, for instance: "Devil take me, I feel a dashing fine fellow to-day." [1] . . . Terrible preparations began, as was fitting. One cosmetic-shop sold sixteen dark-blue jars of pomade, with the inscription, "à la jesmin" with the Russian character denoting the hard pronunciation after the *n*. The young ladies supplied themselves with stiff gowns, torturingly tight at the waist-line, and with promontories on the stomach; the mammas erected on their own heads formidable decorations, under the pretext that they were caps; the bustling fathers lay without their hind legs, as the saying is.[2] . . .

The longed-for day arrived at last. I was among those invited. The distance from the town to Gornostáevka was reckoned at nine versts. Kiríla Matvyéevitch offered me a seat in his carriage; but I declined. . . . Thus do chastised children, desirous of revenging themselves well on their parents, refuse their favourite viands at table. Moreover, I felt that my presence would embarrass Liza. Bizmyónkoff took my place. The Prince drove out in his own calash, I in a miserable drozhky, which I had

[1] The pronunciation is also indicated as being faulty.—TRANSLATOR.
[2] Ran themselves off their legs.—TRANSLATOR.

hired at an exorbitant price for this festive occasion.

I will not describe the ball. Everything about it was as usual: musicians with remarkably false horns in the gallery; flustered landed proprietors with antiquated families; lilac ice-cream, slimy orgeat; men in patched boots and knitted cotton gloves; provincial lions with convulsively-distorted faces; and so forth, and so forth. And all this little world circled round its sun—round the Prince. Lost in the throng, unnoticed even by the maidens of eight-and-forty with pimples on their brows and blue flowers on their temples, I kept incessantly gazing now at the Prince, now at Liza. She was very charmingly dressed and very pretty that evening. They only danced together twice (he danced the mazurka [1] with her, 't is true!), but, at all events, so it seemed to *me,* there existed between them a certain mysterious, unbroken communication. Even when he was not looking at her, was not talking to her, he seemed constantly to be addressing her, and her alone; he was handsome and brilliant, and charming with others—for her alone. She was evidently conscious that she was the queen of the ball—and beloved; her face simultaneously beamed with childish joy and innocent pride, and

[1] The mazurka, which is still a great favourite in Russia, greatly resembles the cotillon in everything except the steps, which are vivacious. Both the cotillon and the mazurka are danced—one before, the other after supper—at Court balls and other dances.—Translator.

then suddenly was lighted up with a different, a more profound feeling. She exhaled an atmosphere of happiness. I observed all this. . . . It was not the first time I had had occasion to watch them. . . . At first this greatly pained me, then it seemed to touch me, and at last it enraged me. I suddenly felt myself remarkably malicious and, I remember, I rejoiced wonderfully over this new sensation, and even conceived a certain respect for myself. "Let 's show them that we have n't perished yet!" I said to myself. When the first sounds summoning to the mazurka thundered out, I calmly glanced around, coldly, and with much ease of manner, approached a long-faced young lady with a red and shining nose, an awkwardly gaping mouth, which looked as though it had been unhooked, and a sinewy neck, which reminded one of the handle of a bass-viol,—approached her, and curtly clicking my heels together, invited her for the dance. She wore a pink gown, which seemed to have faded recently and not quite completely; above her head quivered some sort of a faded melancholy fly on a very thick brass spring; and, altogether, the young woman was impregnated through and through, if one may so express one's self, with a sort of sour boredom and antiquated ill-success. From the very beginning of the evening, she had not stirred from her seat; no one had thought of asking her to dance. One sixteen-year-old youth,

in default of any other partner, had been on the point of appealing to this young woman, and had already taken one step in her direction, but had bethought himself, taken one look, and briskly concealed himself in the crowd. You can imagine with what joyful surprise she accepted my proposal!

I solemnly led her the whole length of the hall, found two chairs, and seated myself with her in the circle of the mazurka, the tenth pair, almost opposite the Prince, to whom, of course, the first place had been conceded. The Prince, as I have already said, was dancing with Liza. Neither my partner nor I were incommoded with invitations; consequently, we had plenty of time for conversation. Truth to tell, my lady was not distinguished by ability to utter words in coherent speech: she employed her mouth more for the execution of a strange downward smile, hitherto unbeheld by me; at the same time, she rolled her eyes upward, as though some invisible force were stretching her face; but I had no need of her eloquence. Fortunately, I felt vicious, and my partner did not inspire me with timidity. I set to criticising everything and everybody in the world, laying special stress on whipper-snappers from the capital, and Petersburg fops, and waxed so angry, at last, that my lady gradually ceased to smile, and instead of rolling her eyes upward, she suddenly began—with amazement,

it must have been—to look cross-eyed, and in such a queer way, to boot, as though she had perceived, for the first time, that she had a nose on her face; and my next neighbour, one of those lions of whom I have spoken above, more than once scanned me with a glance, even turned to me with the expression of an actor on the stage who has waked up in an unknown land, as much as to say: "Art thou still at it?" However, while I sang like a nightingale, as the saying is, I still continued to watch the Prince and Liza. They were constantly invited; but I suffered less when both of them were dancing; and even when they were sitting side by side and chatting with each other, and smiling with that gentle smile which refuses to leave the face of happy lovers,—even then I was not so greatly pained; but when Liza was fluttering through the hall with some gallant dandy, and the Prince, with her blue gauze scarf on his knees, thoughtfully followed her with his eyes, as though admiring his conquest,—then, oh, then I experienced unbearable tortures, and in my vexation I emitted such malicious remarks, that the pupils of my partner's eyes reclined completely from both sides, on her nose!

In the meantime, the mazurka was drawing to a close. . . . They began to execute the figure known as "la confidente." In this figure the lady seats herself in the centre of the circle, chooses another lady for her confidante and

whispers in her ear the name of the gentleman with whom she wishes to dance; the cavalier leads up to her the dancers, one by one, and the confidante refuses them until, at last, the happy man who has already been designated makes his appearance. Liza sat in the centre of the circle, and chose the daughter of the hostess, one of those young girls of whom it is said that they are "God bless them."[1] The Prince began to search for the chosen man. In vain did he present about half a score of young men (the hostess' daughter refused them all, with a pleasant smile), and, at last, had recourse to me. Something unusual took place in me at that moment: I seemed to wink with my whole body, and tried to decline; nevertheless, I rose and went. The Prince conducted me to Liza. . . . She did not even glance at me; the hostess' daughter shook her head in negation, the Prince turned toward me, and, prompted probably by the goose-like expression of my face, made me a profound bow. This mocking reverence, this refusal, presented to me by my triumphant rival, his negligent smile, Liza's indifferent inattention,—all this provoked an explosion on my part. I stepped up to the Prince and whispered in a frenzied rage: "I think you are permitting yourself to jeer at me?"

The Prince stared at me with scornful surprise, again took me by the hand, and with the air

[1] Utterly insignificant.—Translator.

of leading me back to my seat, replied coldly: "I?"

"Yes, you, you!"—I went on in a whisper, obeying him, nevertheless; that is to say, following him to my seat;—"you! But I do not intend to allow any frivolous Petersburg upstart . . ."

The Prince smiled calmly, almost patronisingly, gripped my hand hard, whispered: "I understand you; but this is not the proper place; we will talk it over," turned away from me, approached Bizmyónkoff and led him to Liza. The pale little petty official proved to be the chosen cavalier. Liza rose to meet him.

As I sat beside my partner with the melancholy fly on her head, I felt myself almost a hero. My heart thumped violently within me, my bosom swelled nobly under my starched shirt-front, my breath came fast and deep—and all of a sudden, I stared at the adjacent lion in so magnificent a manner, that he involuntarily wiggled the leg which was turned toward me. Having rid myself of this man, I ran my eyes over the circle of dancers. . . . It seemed to me that two or three gentlemen were gazing at me not without amazement; but, on the whole, my conversation with the Prince had not been noticed. . . . My rival was already seated on his chair, perfectly composed, and with his former smile on his face. Bizmyónkoff led Liza to her place. She gave him a friendly nod and immediately turned to

the Prince, as it seemed to me, with a certain anxiety; but he laughed in response, waved his hand gracefully, and must have said something very agreeable to her, for she flushed all over with pleasure, dropped her eyes, and then riveted them on him once more with affectionate reproach.

The heroic frame of mind which had suddenly developed in me did not disappear until the end of the mazurka; but I made no more jests, and did not criticise, and merely cast a severe and gloomy glance from time to time at my lady, who was, evidently, beginning to be afraid of me, and was reduced to a state of complete stammering and winked incessantly, when I led her to the natural stronghold of her mother, a very fat woman with a red head-dress. Having handed over the frightened young girl as behooved me, I walked off to the window, clasped my hands, and waited to see what would happen. I waited a good while. The Prince was constantly surrounded by the host,—precisely that, surrounded, as England is surrounded by the sea,—not to mention the other members of the county Marshal of the Nobility's family, and the other guests; and, moreover, he could not, without arousing universal surprise, approach such an insignificant man as I, and enter into conversation with him. This insignificance of mine, I remember, was even a source of delight

to me then. "Fiddlesticks!" I thought, as I watched him turning courteously now to one, now to another respected personage who sought the honour of being noticed by him, if only for "the twinkling of an eye," as the poets say:—"Fiddlesticks, my dear fellow! . . . . Thou wilt come to me by and by—for I have insulted thee."

At last the Prince, having cleverly got rid of the crowd of his adorers, strode past me, darted a glance, not exactly at the window, nor yet exactly at my hair, was on the point of turning away, and suddenly came to a halt, as though he had just remembered something.

"Akh, yes!"—he said, addressing me with a smile;—"by the way, I have a little matter of business with you."

Two landed proprietors, the most persistent of all, who were obstinately following up the Prince, probably thought that the "little matter of business" was connected with the service, and respectfully retreated. The Prince put his arm in mine, and led me to one side. My heart thumped in my breast.

"You,"—he began, drawling out the word *you,* and staring at my chin with a contemptuous expression which, strange to say, was infinitely becoming to his fresh, handsome face,—"you said something insolent to me, I believe."

"I said what I thought,"—I retorted, raising my voice.

"Ssssh . . . . speak more quietly,"—he remarked:—"well-bred men do not shout. Perhaps you would like to fight with me?"

"That is your affair,"—I replied, drawing myself up.

"I shall be compelled to call you out,"—he said carelessly,—"if you do not withdraw your expressions. . . ."

"I have no intention of withdrawing anything,"—I retorted proudly.

"Really?"—he remarked, not without a sneering smile.—"In that case,"—he went on, after a brief pause,—"I shall have the honour to send my second to you to-morrow."

"Very well, sir,"—I said in the most indifferent tone I could muster.

The Prince bowed slightly.

"I cannot forbid you to think me a frivolous man,"—he added, arrogantly narrowing his eyes;—"but it is impossible that the Princes N*** should be upstarts. Farewell for the present, Mr. . . . Mr. Shtukatúrin."

He quickly turned his back on me, and again approached his host, who had already begun to grow agitated.

"Mr. Shtukatúrin"! . . . . My name is Tchulkatúrin. . . . I could find no reply to make to this last insult of his, and only stared after him in a violent rage.—"Farewell until to-morrow," I whispered, setting my teeth, and immediately

hunted up an officer of my acquaintance, Captain Koloberdyáeff of the uhlans, a desperate carouser and a splendid fellow, narrated to him in a few words my quarrel with the Prince, and asked him to be my second. He, of course, immediately consented, and I wended my way homeward.

I could not get to sleep all night—from agitation, not from pusillanimity. I am no coward. I even thought very little indeed about the impending possibility of losing my life, that highest good on earth, according to the Germans. I thought of Liza only, of my dead hopes, of what I ought to do. "Ought I to try to kill the Prince?" I asked myself, and, of course, wanted to kill him,—not out of vengeance, but out of a desire for Liza's good. "But she will not survive that blow," I went on. "No, it will be better to let him kill me!"

I confess that it was also pleasant to me to think that I, an obscure man from the country, had forced so important a personage to fight a duel with me.

Dawn found me engrossed in these cogitations; and later in the morning, Koloberdyáeff presented himself.

"Well,"—he asked me, noisily entering my bedroom,—"and where 's the Prince's second?"

"Why, good gracious!"—I replied with vexation,—"it 's only seven o'clock in the morn-

ing now; I presume the Prince is still fast asleep."

"In that case,"—returned the irrepressible cavalry-captain,—"order them to give me some tea. I have a headache from last night's doings. . . . . I have n't even been undressed. However,"—he added with a yawn,—"I rarely do undress anyway."

Tea was served to him. He drank six glasses with rum, smoked four pipes, told me that on the preceding day he had bought for a song a horse which the coachmen had given up as a bad job, and intended to break it in by tying up one of its forelegs,—and fell asleep, without undressing, on the couch, with his pipe still in his mouth. I rose, and put my papers in order. One note of invitation from Liza, the only note I had received from her, I was on the point of putting in my breast, but changed my mind, and tossed it into a box. Koloberdyáeff was snoring faintly, with his head hanging down from the leather cushions. . . . I remember that I surveyed for a long time his dishevelled, dashing, care-free and kindly face. At ten o'clock my servant announced the arrival of Bizmyónkoff. The Prince had selected him for his second.

Together we roused the soundly-sleeping captain. He rose, stared at us with eyes owlishly stupid from sleep, and in a hoarse voice asked for vodka;—he recovered himself, and after hav-

ing exchanged salutes with Bizmyónkoff, went out with him into the next room for consultation. The conference of the seconds did not last long. A quarter of an hour later they both came to me in my bedroom; Koloberdyáeff announced to me that "we shall fight to-day, at three o'clock, with pistols." I silently bowed my head, in token of assent. Bizmyónkoff immediately took leave of us, and drove away. He was somewhat pale and inwardly agitated, like a man who is not accustomed to that sort of performance, but was very polite and cold. I seemed, somehow, to feel ashamed in his presence, and I did not dare to look him in the eye.

Koloberdyáeff began to talk about his horse again. This conversation was very much to my taste. I was afraid he might mention Liza. But my good captain was no scandal-monger, and, more than that, he despised all women, calling them, God knows why, "salad." At two o'clock we lunched, and at three were already on the field of action—in that same birch-grove where I had once strolled with Liza, a couple of paces from that cliff.

We were the first to arrive. But the Prince and Bizmyónkoff did not make us wait long for them. The Prince was, without exaggeration, as fresh as a rose; his brown eyes gazed out with extreme affability from beneath the visor of his military cap. He was smoking a straw cigar,

and on catching sight of Koloberdyáeff he shook hands with him in a cordial manner. He even bowed very charmingly to me. I, on the contrary, felt conscious that I was pale, and my hands, to my intense vexation, were trembling slightly; . . . my throat was dry. . . Never, up to that time, had I fought a duel. "O God!" I thought; "if only that sneering gentleman does not take my agitation for timidity!" I inwardly consigned my nerves to all the fiends; but on glancing, at last, straight at the Prince's face, and catching on his lips an almost imperceptible smile, I suddenly became inflated with wrath, and immediately recovered my equanimity.

In the meantime, our seconds had arranged the barrier, had paced off the distance, and loaded the pistols. Koloberdyáeff did most of the active part; Bizmyónkoff chiefly watched him. It was a magnificent day—quite equal to the day of the never-to-be-forgotten stroll. The dense azure of the sky again peeped through the gilded green of the leaves. Their rustling seemed to excite me. The Prince continued to smoke his cigar, as he leaned his shoulder against the trunk of a linden. . . .

"Be so good as to take your places, gentlemen; all is ready,"—said Koloberdyáeff at last, handing us the pistols.

The Prince retreated a few paces, halted, and

turning his head back over his shoulder, asked me: "And do you still refuse to withdraw your words?" . . . I tried to answer him; but my voice failed me, and I contented myself with a disdainful motion of the hand. The Prince laughed again, and took his place. We began to approach each other. I raised my pistol, and was on the point of taking aim at the breast of my enemy,—at that moment he really was my enemy,—but suddenly elevated the barrel, as though some one had jogged my elbow, and fired. The Prince staggered, raised his left hand to his left temple —a thin stream of blood trickled down his cheek from beneath his white wash-leather glove. Bizmyónkoff flew to him.

"It is nothing,"—he said, taking off his cap, which had been perforated;—"if it did not enter my head, that means it is only a scratch."

He calmly pulled a batiste handkerchief from his pocket, and laid it on his curls, which were wet with blood. I looked at him as though petrified, and did not stir from the spot.

"Please go to the barrier!"—remarked Koloberdyáeff to me with severity.

I obeyed.

"Shall the duel go on?"—he added, addressing Bizmyónkoff.

Bizmyónkoff made him no reply; but the Prince, without removing the handkerchief from the wound, nor even giving himself the satis-

faction of teasing me at the barrier, replied with a smile: "The duel is ended," and fired into the air. I nearly wept with vexation and rage. That man, by his magnanimity, had definitively trampled me in the mud, had cut my throat. I wanted to protest, I wanted to demand that he should fire at me; but he stepped up to me, and offering me his hand, "Everything is forgotten between us, is it not?"—he said, in a cordial voice.

I cast a glance at his pale face, at that blood-stained handkerchief, and utterly losing my head, blushing with shame, and annihilated, I pressed his hand. . .

"Gentlemen!"—he added, addressing the seconds:—"I hope that all this will remain a secret?"

"Of course!"—exclaimed Koloberdyáeff,—"but, Prince, allow me. . . ."

And he himself bound up his head.

The Prince, as he departed, bowed to me once more; but Bizmyónkoff did not even bestow a glance on me. Slain,—morally slain,—I returned home with Koloberdyáeff.

"But what ails you?"—the captain asked me. "Calm yourself; the wound is not dangerous. He can dance to-morrow, if he likes. Or are you sorry that you did not kill him? In that case, you 're wrong; he 's a splendid fellow."

"Why did he spare me?!"—I muttered at last.

"Oho! so that 's it!"—calmly retorted the captain. . . "Okh, these romancers will be the death of me!"

I positively refuse to describe my tortures in the course of the evening which followed this unlucky duel. My pride suffered inexpressibly. It was not my conscience which tormented me; the consciousness of my stupidity annihilated me. "I myself have dealt myself the last, the final blow!" I kept repeating as I paced my room with long strides. . . . "The Prince wounded by me and forgiving me . . . . yes, Liza is his now. Nothing can save her now, nor hold her back on the brink of perdition." I was very well aware that our duel could not remain a secret, in spite of the Prince's words; in any case, it could not remain a secret to Liza. "The Prince is not so stupid"—I whispered in a frenzy—"as not to take advantage of it." . . . And, nevertheless, I was mistaken: the whole town heard about the duel and its actual cause,—on the very next day, of course; but it was not the Prince who had babbled—on the contrary; when he had presented himself to Liza with a bandaged head and an excuse which had been prepared in advance, she already knew everything. . . Whether Bizmyónkoff had betrayed me, or whether the news had reached her by other roads, I cannot say. And, after all, is it possible to conceal anything in a small town? You can imagine how Liza took it,

how the whole Ozhógin family took it! As for me, I suddenly became the object of universal indignation, of loathing, a monster, a crazily jealous man, and a cannibal. My few acquaintances renounced me, as they would have renounced a leper. The town authorities appealed to the Prince with a proposition to chastise me in a stern and exemplary manner; only the persistent and importunate entreaties of the Prince himself warded off the calamity which menaced my head. This man was fated to annihilate me in every way. By his magnanimity he had shut me up as though with my coffin-lid. It is needless to say that the Ozhógins' house was immediately closed to me. Kiríla Matvyéevitch even returned to me a plain pencil, which I had left at his residence. In reality, he was precisely the last man who should have been incensed with me. My "crazy" jealousy, as they called it in the town, had defined, elucidated, so to speak, the relations between Liza and the Prince. The old Ozhógins themselves and the other residents began to look upon him almost in the light of a betrothed husband. In reality, that could not have been quite agreeable to him; but he liked Liza very much; and moreover, at that time he had not, as yet, attained his object. . . . With all the tact of a clever man of the world, he accommodated himself to his new position, immediately entered into the spirit of his new part, as the saying is. . . .

But I! . . . I then gave up in despair, so far as I myself was concerned, and so far as my future was concerned. When sufferings reach such a pitch that they make our whole inward being crack and creak like an overloaded cart, they ought to cease being ridiculous. . . . But no! laughter not only accompanies tears to the end, to exhaustion, to the point where it is impossible to shed any more of them,—not at all! it still rings and resounds at a point where the tongue grows dumb and lamentation itself dies away. . . . And then, in the first place, as I have no intention of appearing absurd even to myself, and in the second place, as I am frightfully tired, I shall defer the continuation and, God willing, the conclusion of my story until to-morrow. . . .

March 29. A light frost; last night there was a thaw.

Yesterday I was unable to go on with my diary; like Póprishshtchin, I lay most of the time in bed, and chatted with Teréntievna. There 's a woman for you! Sixty years ago she lost her first betrothed from the plague, she has outlived all her children, she herself is unpardonably old, she drinks tea to her heart's content, she is well-fed, warmly clad; but what do you think she talked to me about yesterday? I had ordered that the cape of an old livery-coat should be given to another utterly denuded old woman for

a waistcoat (she wears a breast-piece in the shape of a waistcoat). . . . The cape was pretty thoroughly eaten by moths, so why should not she have it? "Well, it strikes me that I 'm your nurse. . . . O-okh, my dear little father, 't is a sin for you to do that. . . . And have n't I been tending you?" . . . . and so forth. The merciless old woman fairly wore me out with her reproaches. . . . But let us return to the story.

So, then, I suffered like a dog which has had the hind part of its body run over by a wheel. Only then,—only after my expulsion from the Ozhógins' house,—did I become definitively aware how much pleasure a man may derive from the contemplation of his own unhappiness. Oh, men! ye are, in reality, a pitiful race! . . . Well, but that is in the nature of a philosophical remark. . . . I passed my days in utter solitude, and only in the most roundabout and even base ways was I able to find out what was going on in the Ozhógin family, what the Prince was doing. My servant struck up an acquaintance with the great-aunt of the wife of his coachman. This acquaintance afforded me some alleviation, and my servant speedily was able, from my hints and gifts, to divine what it behooved him to talk about with his master, when he was pulling off the latter's boots at night. Sometimes I chanced to meet in the street some member of the Ozhógin family,

Bizmyónkoff, or the Prince. . . . With the Prince and Bizmyónkoff I exchanged bows, but I did not enter into conversation. I saw Liza thrice in all: once with her mamma, in a milliner's shop, once in an open calash with her father, her mother, and the Prince; once in church. Of course, I did not venture to approach her, and only gazed at her from afar. In the shop she was anxious but cheerful. . . . She was ordering something for herself, and busily trying on ribbons. Her mother was gazing at her, with hands clasped on her stomach, her nose elevated, and indulging in that stupid and affectionate smile which is permissible only to fond mothers. Liza was in the calash with the Prince. . . . I shall never forget that meeting! The old Ozhógins were sitting on the back seat of the calash, the Prince and Liza in front. She was paler than usual; two pink streaks were barely discernible on her cheeks. She was half-turned toward the Prince; supporting herself on her outstretched right hand (she was holding her parasol in her left), and wearily bending her head, she was gazing straight into his face with her expressive eyes. At that moment she was surrendering herself utterly to him, trusting him irrevocably. I did not have a chance to get a good look at his face,—the calash dashed past too swiftly,—but it seemed to me that he also was deeply moved.

The third time I saw her was in church. Not more than ten days had elapsed since the day when I had encountered her in the calash with the Prince, not more than three weeks since my duel. The business on account of which the Prince had come to O*** had long been finished; but he still deferred his departure; he reported in Petersburg that he was ill. In the city, people were expecting every day a formal proposal on his part to Kiríla Matvyéevitch. I myself was only waiting for this last blow, in order to retire forever. The town of O*** had grown loathsome to me. I could not sit still at home, and from morning till night I dragged myself about the suburbs. One grey, wet day, as I was returning from a stroll which had been cut short by the rain, I stepped into the church. The evening service was only just beginning, there were very few people present; I looked about me, and suddenly, near a window, I descried a familiar profile. At first I did not recognise it; that pale face, that extinct glance, those sunken cheeks—could it be the same Liza whom I had seen two weeks before? Enveloped in a cloak, with no hat on her head, illuminated from one side by a cold ray of light, which fell through the broad window of white glass, she was staring immovably at the ikonostásis, and, apparently, making a violent effort to pray, striving to escape from some sort of dejected rigidity. A fat, red-

cheeked page with yellow cartridge-cases on his breast [1] was standing behind her, with his hands clasped behind his back, and staring with sleepy surprise at his mistress. I shuddered all over; I started to go to her, but stopped short. A torturing forboding gripped my breast. Liza never stirred until the very end of vespers. All the congregation departed, a chanter began to sweep out the church, and still she did not stir from her place. The page approached her, and touched her gown; she glanced round, passed her hand over her face, and went away. I escorted her, at a distance, to her house, then returned home.

"She is ruined!" I exclaimed, as I entered my room.

Being a man, I do not know to this day what was the nature of my sensations then. I remember that, folding my arms, I flung myself on the divan, and riveted my eyes on the floor; but I did not know why, only, in the midst of my grief, I seemed to be pleased at something. . . . I would not have admitted that on any account, if I were not writing for myself. . . . I really had been tortured by painful, terrible forebodings . . . . and, who knows, perhaps I should have been disconcerted if they had not been fulfilled. "Such is the human heart!" some middle-aged Russian teacher would exclaim at this

[1] The page is called a kazák, and dressed accordingly. —Translator.

point, in an expressive voice, raising on high his thick forefinger adorned with a carnelian ring. But what care we for the opinion of a Russian teacher with an expressive voice, and a carnelian ring on his finger?

Be that as it may, my forebodings had turned out to be correct. The news suddenly spread through the town that the Prince had taken his departure, in consequence, nominally, of an order from Petersburg; that he had gone away without having made any proposal of marriage either to Kiríla Matvyéevitch or to his spouse, and that Liza would continue to mourn his perfidy to the end of her days. The Prince's departure had been entirely unexpected, because, as late as the evening before, his coachman, according to the assertions of my servant, had not in the least suspected his master's intention. This news threw me into a fever. I immediately dressed myself, was on the point of running to the Ozhógins'; but after thinking the matter over, I concluded that it would be decorous to wait until the following day. However, I lost nothing by remaining at home. That evening there ran in to see me a certain Pandopipópulo, a Greek on his travels, who had accidentally got stranded in O***, a gossip of the first magnitude, who, more than any one else, had seethed with indignation against me for my duel with the Prince. He did not even give my servant time to announce him, but

fairly forced his way into my room, shook me vigorously by the hand, made a thousand excuses for his conduct, called me a model of magnanimity and fearlessness, depicted the Prince in the blackest colours, did not spare the old Ozhógins, whom Fate had, in his opinion, justly punished; he gave a hit at Liza also in passing, and ran off, after kissing me on the shoulder. Among other things, I learned from him that the Prince, *en vrai grand seigneur,* on the eve of his departure, had replied coldly to a delicate hint from Kiríla Matvyéevitch, that he had not intended to deceive any one and was not thinking of marrying; had risen, and made his bow, and that was the last they had seen of him. . . .

On the following day, I betook myself to the Ozhógins'. The blear-eyed footman, at my appearance, sprang from the bench in the anteroom with lightning-like swiftness; I ordered him to announce me. The lackey hastened off, and immediately returned: "Please enter," said he; "I am ordered to invite you in." I entered Kiríla Matvyéevitch's study. . . . Until to-morrow.

March 30. A frost.

So, then, I entered Kiríla Matvyéevitch's study. I would give a good deal to any one who could have shown me my own face at the moment when that worthy official, hastily wrapping his Bu-

kharâ dressing-gown round him, stepped forward to meet me with outstretched hands. I must have fairly radiated an atmosphere of modest triumph, patronising sympathy, and limitless magnanimity. . . . I felt that I was something in the nature of Scipio Africanus. Ozhógin was visibly embarrassed and depressed, avoided my eye, and shifted from foot to foot where he stood. I also noticed that he talked in an unnaturally-loud manner, and altogether expressed himself very indefinitely;—indefinitely, but with fervour, did he beg my pardon, indefinitely alluded to the departed visitor, added a few general and indefinite remarks about the deceitfulness and instability of earthly blessings, and suddenly, becoming conscious of a tear in his eye, he hastened to take a pinch of snuff, probably with the object of deluding me as to the cause which was making him weep. . . . He used green Russian snuff, and every one knows that that plant makes even old men shed tears, athwart which the human eye peers forth dimly and senselessly for the space of several minutes.

As a matter of course I treated the old man very cautiously, inquired after the health of his wife and daughter, and at once turned the conversation artfully on the interesting question of rotation of crops. I was dressed as usual; but the feeling of soft decorum and gentle condescension which filled my breast, afforded me a

festive and fresh sensation, as though I were wearing a white waistcoat and a white neckcloth. One thing disturbed me: the thought of meeting Liza again. . . . At last Ozhógin himself proposed to conduct me to his wife. That good, but stupid woman, on beholding me, at first became frightfully embarrassed; but her brain was incapable of preserving one and the same impression for long together, and therefore she speedily recovered her equanimity. At last I saw Liza. . . . She entered the room. . . .

I had expected that I should find in her an abashed, penitent sinner, and had already in advance imparted to my face the most cordial and encouraging expression. . . . Why should I lie? I really loved her and thirsted for the happiness of forgiving her, of putting out my hand to her; but, to my unspeakable amazement, in reply to my significant bow, she laughed coldly, remarked carelessly: "Ah? so it 's you?" and immediately turned away from me. Her laugh appeared to me forced, it is true, and, in any case, was ill-suited to her dreadfully emaciated face. . . . But, nevertheless, I had not expected such a reception. . . . I stared at her in astonishment. . . . What a change had taken place in her! Between the former child and this woman there was nothing in common. She seemed to have grown taller, to have drawn herself up straighter; all her features, especially her lips, seemed to have ac-

quired a more defined outline . . . . her gaze had become more profound, more firm, and dark. I sat with the Ozhógins until dinner; she rose, left the room and returned to it, calmly replied to questions, and deliberately took no heed of me. I could see that she wished to make me feel that I was not worthy even of her anger, although I had come near killing her lover. At last I lost patience: a malicious hint broke from my lips. . . . She shuddered, darted a swift glance at me, rose, and, walking to the window, said in a voice which trembled slightly: "You can say anything you like, but you must know that I love that man and shall always love him, and do not consider him to blame toward me in the slightest degree, on the contrary . . . ." Her voice broke with a tinkle, she paused . . . . tried to control herself, but could not, and burst into tears and left the room. . . . The elder Ozhógins grew confused. . . . I shook hands with both of them, sighed, cast a glance upward, and went away.

I am too weak, there is too little time left to me, I am not in a condition to describe with my former minuteness this new series of torturing meditations, firm intentions, and other fruits of the so-called inward conflict, which started up in me after the renewal of my acquaintance with the Ozhógins. I did not doubt that Liza still loved and would long love the Prince . . . . but, being a man tamed now by circumstances and

who had resigned himself to his fate, I did not even dream of her love: I merely desired her friendship, I wanted to win her confidence, her respect, which, according to the assertions of experienced persons, is regarded as the most trustworthy foundation for happiness in marriage. . . . . Unhappily, I had lost sight of one rather important circumstance—namely, that Liza had hated me ever since the day of the duel. I learned this too late.

I began to frequent the Ozhógins' house as of yore. Kiríla Matvyéevitch was more cordial to me and petted me more than ever. I even have cause to think that at the time he would have gladly given me his daughter, although I was not an enviable match: public opinion condemned him and Liza, and, on the other hand, extolled me to the skies. Liza's treatment of me did not change: she maintained silence most of the time, obeyed when she was bidden to eat, displayed no outward signs of grief, but, nevertheless, she wasted away like a candle. I must do justice to Kiríla Matvyéevitch: he spared her in every possible way; old Madame Ozhógin merely bristled up as she looked at her poor child. There was only one man whom Liza did not avoid, although she did not talk much to him, namely, Bizmyónkoff. The old Ozhógins treated him sternly, even roughly; they could not pardon him for having acted as second; but he continued to come to their

house, as though he did not notice their disfavour. With me he was very cold, and,—strange to say! —I felt afraid of him, as it were. This state of things lasted for about a fortnight. At last, after a sleepless night, I made up my mind to have an explanation with Liza, to lay bare my heart before her; to tell her that, notwithstanding the past, notwithstanding all sorts of rumours and gossip, I should regard myself as too happy if she would favour me with her hand, would restore to me her trust. I really, without jesting, imagined that I was exhibiting, as the compendiums of literature put it, an unprecedented example of magnanimity, and that she would give her consent out of sheer amazement. In any case, I wanted to clear up the situation with her, and escape, definitively, from my state of uncertainty.

Behind the Ozhógins' house lay a fairly spacious garden, terminating in a linden coppice, neglected and overgrown. In the middle of this coppice rose an old arbour in the Chinese style; a board fence separated the garden from a blind-alley. Liza sometimes strolled for hours at a time alone in this garden. Kiríla Matvyéevitch knew this and had given orders that she was not to be disturbed, and kept a watch over her: "Let her grief wear itself out," he said. When she was not to be found in the house, it was only necessary to ring a small bell on the porch at

dinner-time, and she immediately presented herself, with the same obdurate taciturnity on her lips and in her gaze, and some sort of crumpled leaf in her hand. So, one day, observing that she was not in the house, I pretended that I was making ready to depart, took leave of Kiríla Matvyéevitch, put on my hat, and emerged from the anteroom into the courtyard, and from the courtyard into the street, but instantly, with extraordinary swiftness, slipped back through the gate and made my way past the kitchen into the garden. Luckily, no one espied me. Without pausing long to think, I entered the grove with hasty steps. Before me, on the path, stood Liza. My heart began to beat violently in my breast. I stopped short, heaved a deep sigh, and was on the point of approaching her, when all of a sudden, without turning round, she raised her hand and began to listen. . . . From behind the trees, in the direction of the blind-alley, two knocks rang out clearly, as though some one were tapping on the fence. Liza clapped her hands, a faint squeaking of the wicket-gate became audible, and Bizmyónkoff emerged from the coppice. I promptly hid myself behind a tree. Liza turned silently toward him. . . . Silently he drew her arm through his, and both walked softly along the path. I stared after them in astonishment. They halted, looked about them, disappeared behind the bushes, appeared again, and finally entered the ar-

bour. This arbour was circular in shape, a tiny little building, with one door and one small window; in the centre was to be seen an old table with a single leg, overgrown with fine green moss; two faded little plank divans stood at the sides, at some distance from the damp and dark-hued walls. Here, on unusually hot days, and that once a year, and in former times, they had been in the habit of drinking tea. The door would not shut at all; the frame had long ago fallen out of the window and, catching by one corner, dangled mournfully, like the wounded wing of a bird. I stole up to the arbour and cautiously glanced through a crack of the window. Liza was sitting on one of the little divans, with drooping head; her right hand lay on her lap; Bizmyónkoff was holding the left in both his hands. He was gazing at her with sympathy.

"How do you feel to-day?"—he asked her, in a low voice.

"Just the same!"—she replied;—"neither better nor worse.—Emptiness, frightful emptiness!"—she added, dejectedly raising her eyes.

Bizmyónkoff made no reply.

"What think you," she went on;—"will he write to me again?"

"I think not, Lizavéta Kiríllovna!"

She remained silent for a while.

"And, in fact, what is there for him to write about? He told me everything in his first letter.

I could not be his wife; but I was happy . . . not for long. . . . I was happy. . . ."

Bizmyónkoff lowered his eyes.

"Akh,"—she went on with animation;—"if you only knew how loathsome that Tchulkatúrin is to me! . . . It always seems to me that I can see . . . . . his blood . . . on that man's hands." (I writhed behind my crack.) "However,"—she added thoughtfully;—"who knows,—perhaps had it not been for that duel . . . . Akh, when I beheld him wounded, I immediately felt that I was all his."

"Tchulkatúrin loves you,"—remarked Bizmyónkoff.

"What do I care for that? Do I need any one's love? . . ." She paused, and added slowly: . . . "except yours. Yes, my friend, your love is indispensable to me: without you I should have perished. You have helped me to endure terrible moments. . . ."

She ceased. . . . Bizmyónkoff began to stroke her hand with paternal tenderness. "There 's no help for it, there 's no help for it, Lizavéta Kirílovna,"—he repeated, several times in succession.

"Yes, and now,"—she said dully,—"I think I should die if it were not for you. You alone sustain me; moreover, you remind me . . . . For you know everything. Do you remember how handsome he was that day? . . . . But forgive me: it must be painful for you. . . ."

"Speak, speak! What do you mean? God bless you!"—Bizmyónkoff interrupted her. She squeezed his hand.

"You are very kind, Bizmyónkoff,"—she went on:—"you are as kind as an angel. What am I to do? I feel that I shall love him until I die. I have forgiven him, I am grateful to him. May God grant him happiness! May God give him a wife after his own heart!"—And her eyes filled with tears.—"If only he does not forget me, if only he will now and then recall his Liza to mind. Let us go out,"—she added, after a brief pause.

Bizmyónkoff raised her hand to his lips.

"I know,"—she began with warmth,—"every one is blaming me, every one is casting stones at me now. Let them! All the same, I would not exchange my unhappiness for their happiness . . . no! no! . . . He did not love me long, but he did love me! He never deceived me: he did not tell me that I was to be his wife; I myself never thought of such a thing. Only poor papa hoped for that. And now I am still not utterly unhappy: there remains to me the memory, and however terrible the consequences may be . . . . I am stifling here . . . . it was here that I saw him for the last time. . . . Let us go out into the air."

They rose. I barely managed to leap aside and hide behind a thick linden. They came out of the arbour and, so far as I was able to judge from the sound of their footsteps, went off into the grove.

I do not know how long I had been standing there, without stirring from the spot, absorbed in a sort of irrational surprise, when suddenly the sound of footsteps became audible again. I started and peered cautiously from my ambush. Bizmyónkoff and Liza were returning by the same path. Both were greatly agitated, especially Bizmyónkoff. He had been weeping, apparently. Liza halted, gazed at him, and uttered the following words distinctly: "I consent, Bizmyónkoff. I would not have consented, had you merely wished to save me, to extricate me from a frightful position; but you love me, you know all—and you love me; I shall never find a more trustworthy, faithful friend. I will be your wife."

Bizmyónkoff kissed her hand; she smiled sadly at him, and went to the house. Bizmyónkoff dashed into the thicket, and I went my way. As Bizmyónkoff had probably said to Liza precisely what I had intended to say to her, and as she had given him precisely the answer which I had hoped to hear from her, there was no necessity for my troubling myself further. A fortnight later she married him. The old Ozhógins were glad to get any bridegroom.

Well, tell me now, am not I a superfluous man? Did not I play in the whole of that affair the part of a superfluous man? The rôle of the Prince . . . . as to that, there is nothing to be said; the rôle of Bizmyónkoff also is comprehensible . . . .

But I? Why was I mixed up in it? . . . what a stupid, fifth wheel to the cart I was! . . . Akh, 't is bitter, bitter! . . . So now, as the stevedores on the Volga say: "Heave-ho! heave-ho!"[1]— one more little day, then another, and nothing will be either bitter or sweet to me any more.

March 31.

THINGS are bad. I write these lines in bed. The weather has changed suddenly since yesterday. To-day is hot—almost a summer day. Everything is thawing, crumbling, and streaming. There is an odour of ploughed earth in the air: a heavy, powerful, oppressive odour. The steam is rising everywhere. The sun is fairly beating, fairly blazing down. I am in a bad way. I feel that I am decomposing.

I started out to write a diary, and instead of that, what have I done? I have narrated one incident out of my own life. I have been babbling, sleeping memories have waked up and carried me away. I have written leisurely, in detail, as though I still had years before me; and now, lo, there is no time to continue. Death, death is advancing. I can already hear its menacing crescendo. . . Time 's up. . . . Time 's up! . . .

[1] The *burlaki* on the Volga used to tow the barges from Ástrakhan to Nízhni Nóvgorod Fair, against the current. The stevedores also are called *burlaki*, and, as they lade the barges, their chantey runs (more literally than I have translated it above): "Yet another little time, yet again, . . ." and so forth.—TRANSLATOR.

And where 's the harm? Does it make any difference what I have told? In the presence of death all the last earthly vanities disappear. I feel that I am quieting down; I am becoming more simple, more clear. I have acquired sense, but too late! . . . 'T is strange! I am growing still—'t is true, and, nevertheless, I am overcome with dread. Yes, I am overcome with dread. Half-leaning over the voiceless, yawning gulf, I shudder, I turn aside, with eager attention I gaze about in all directions. Every object is doubly dear to me. I cannot gaze my fill at my poor, cheerless room, as I bid farewell to every tiny fleck on my walls! Sate yourselves for the last time, ye eyes of mine! Life is withdrawing; it is flowing evenly and softly away from me, like the shore from the glances of the traveller by sea. The aged, yellow face of my nurse, bound up in a dark kerchief, the hissing samovár on the table, the pot of geranium in front of the window, and thou, my poor dog, Trésor, the pen wherewith I indite these lines, my own hand, I see you now . . . . there you are, there. . . . Is it possible . . . . to-day perhaps . . . I shall see you no more? 'T is painful for a living being to part with life! Why dost thou fawn on me, poor dog? Why dost thou lean thy breast against my bed convulsively tucking under thy short tail, and never taking from me thy kind, sad eyes? Art thou sorry for me? Dost thou

already feel instinctively that thy master will soon be no more? Akh, if I could also pass in review mentally all the objects in my room! I know that these memories are cheerless and insignificant, but I have no others. Emptiness, frightful emptiness! as Liza said.

Oh, my God! My God! Here I am dying. . . . My heart capable of love, and ready to love, will soon cease to beat. . . And can it be that it will be silenced forever, without having even once tasted of happiness, without having a single time swelled beneath the sweet burden of joy? Alas! 't is impossible, impossible, I know. . . If at least now, before my death—and death, nevertheless, is a sacred thing, for it elevates every being—if some charming, sad, friendly voice were to sing over me the parting song of my own woe, perhaps I might become reconciled to it. But to die is stupid, stupid. . .

I believe I am beginning to rave.

Farewell life, farewell my garden, and you, my lindens! When summer comes, see that you do not forget to cover yourselves with flowers from top to bottom . . . . and may good people lie in your fragrant shade, on the cool grass beneath the lisping murmur of your leaves, lightly agitated by the breeze. Farewell, farewell! Farewell everything, and forever!

Farewell, Liza! I have written these two words—and have almost laughed. That exclam-

ation seems bookish. I seem to be composing a sentimental novel, and ending up a despairing letter. . . .

To-morrow is the first of April. Can it be that I shall die to-morrow? That would be rather indecorous even. However, it befits me. . .

How the doctor did gabble to-day. . . .

April 1.

'T is over. Life is ended. I really shall die to-day. It is hot out of doors . . . almost stifling . . . . or is it that my chest is already refusing to breathe? My little comedy has been played through. The curtain is falling.

In becoming annihilated, I shall cease to be superfluous. . .

Akh, how brilliant that sun is! Those powerful rays exhale eternity. . .

Farewell, Teréntievna! . . . This morning, as she sat by the window, she fell to weeping . . . . perhaps over me . . . and perhaps, because she herself must die before long also. I made her promise " not to hurt " Trésor.

It is difficult for me to write. . . . I drop my pen. . . 'T is time! Death is already drawing near with increasing rumble, like a carriage by night on the pavement: it is here, it is hovering around me, like that faint breath which made the hair of the prophet stand upright on his head. . .

I am dying. . . Live on, ye living.

And may the young life play
At the entrance of the grave,
And Nature the indifferent
With beauty beam forever!

Note of the Editor.—Under this last line there is the profile of a head with a large crest-curl and moustache, with eyes *en face*, and ray-like eyelashes; and under the head some one has written the following words:

The abov manuscript has been read
And the Contints Thereof Bin Approved
By Pyetr Zudotyéshin
M M M M
Dear Sir
Pyetr Zudotyéshin.
My Dear Sir.

But as the chirography of these lines does not in the least agree with the chirography in which the remainder of the note-book is written, the editor considers himself justified in concluding that the above-mentioned lines were added afterward by another person; the more so, as it has come to his (the editor's) knowledge that Mr. Tchulkatúrin really did die on the night of April 1-2, 18 . . , in his natal estate—Ovétchi Vódy.

THREE PORTRAITS

(1840)

THREE PORTRAITS

"THE neighbours" constitute one of the most serious drawbacks to country life. I knew one landed proprietor of the Government of Vólogda, who, at every convenient opportunity, was wont to repeat the following words: "Thank God, I have no neighbours!"—and I must admit that I could not refrain from envying that lucky mortal.

My little village is situated in one of the most thickly-populated governments of Russia. I am surrounded by a vast multitude of petty neighbours, beginning with the well-intentioned and respected landed proprietors, clad in capacious dress-coats, and more capacious waistcoats,—and ending with arrant roysterers, who wear hussar-jackets with long sleeves and the so-called "fimsky" knot on the back. In the ranks of these nobles, however, I have accidentally discovered one very amiable young fellow. Once upon a time he was in the military service, then he retired, and settled down for good and all in the country. According to his account, he served two years in the B*** regiment; but I positively cannot understand how that man

could have discharged any duties whatsoever, not only for the space of two years, but even for the space of two days. He was born "for a peaceful life, for rustic tranquillity," that is to say, for indolent, careless vegetation, which, I may remark in parenthesis, is not devoid of great and inexhaustible charms.

He enjoyed a very respectable property: without troubling himself too much about the management of his estate, he spent about ten thousand rubles [1] a year, procured for himself a capital cook (my friend was fond of good eating); he also imported from Moscow the newest French books and journals. He read nothing in Russian except the reports of his overseer, and that with great difficulty. From morning until dinner (if he did not go off hunting), he did not doff his dressing-gown; he sorted over some sketches or other pertaining to the management, or betook himself to the stable, or to the threshing-shed, and indulged in a good laugh with the peasant wives, who rattled their chains, as the saying is, in his presence, out of ostentation. After dinner my friend dressed himself before the mirror with great care, and drove off to some neighbour endowed with two or three pretty young daughters; heedlessly and pacifically, he

[1] A ruble, at the present time, is worth, on an average, about fifty-two cents. At the period here referred to, the silver ruble would purchase more than a ruble nowadays, while the paper ruble was worth very little.—TRANSLATOR.

dangled after one of them, played at blind-man's buff with them, returned home rather late, and immediately sank into heroic slumber. He could not feel bored, because he never devoted himself to absolute inaction, and he was not fastidious as to his choice of occupations, and, like a child, was amused with the smallest trifle. On the other hand, he felt no special attachment to life, and, it sometimes happened, that when it became necessary to outrun a wolf or a fox, he would launch his horse at full speed over such ravines, that to this day I cannot understand why he did not break his neck a hundred times. He belonged to the category of people who evoke in you the thought that they are not aware of their own value, that beneath their external generosity great and mighty passions are concealed; but he would have laughed in your face, if he could have guessed that you cherished such an opinion concerning him; yes, and, I am bound to admit, I think myself that if my friend was haunted in his youth by any aspiration, indistinct but powerful, toward what is very prettily called "something higher," that aspiration had long, long ago calmed down in him and pined away.

He was rather obese, and enjoyed splendid health. In our age, it is impossible not to like people who give little thought to themselves, because they are extremely rare . . . . and my friend almost completely forgot his own person.

However, I have already said too much about him, I think—and my chattering is all the more ill-placed, since he does not serve as the subject of my story. His name was Piótr Feódorovitch Lutchínoff.

One autumn day, five of us thorough-going sportsmen had assembled together at Piótr Feódorovitch's. We had spent the entire morning in the fields, had coursed two wolves and a multitude of hares, and had returned home in the ravishingly-agreeable frame of mind which invades every well-regulated man after a successful hunt.

Twilight was descending. The wind was playing over the dark fields, and noisily rocking the naked crests of the birches and lindens which surrounded Lutchínoff's house. We arrived, and alighted from our horses. . . On the porch I halted and glanced about me: long storm-clouds were crawling heavily across the grey sky; a dark-brown bush was writhing in the wind, and creaking piteously; the yellow grass bent feebly and sadly to the ground; flocks of blackbirds were flying to and fro among the mountain-ash trees, dotted with clusters of bright-scarlet berries;[1] in the slender and brittle branches of the birch-trees tomtits were hopping and whistling; the dogs were barking hoarsely in the village. Melan-

[1] A very good preserve, with a slightly wild or bitter taste, is made from these berries in Russia. It is a favourite preserve for putting in tea.—TRANSLATOR.

choly overpowered me .... for which reason I entered the dining-room with genuine pleasure. The shutters were closed; on the round table, covered with a cloth of dazzling whiteness, in the midst of crystal caraffes filled with red wine, burned eight candles in silver candlesticks; a fire blazed merrily on the hearth—and an old, very comely butler, with a huge bald spot, dressed in English fashion, stood in respectful immobility in front of another table, which was already adorned with a large soup-tureen, encircled with a light, fragrant steam. In the anteroom we had passed another respectable man, engaged in cooling the champagne—"according to the strict rules of the art."

The dinner was, as is usual on such occasions, extremely agreeable; we laughed, recounted the incidents which had occurred during the hunt, and recalled with rapture two notable "drives." After having dined rather heartily, we disposed ourselves in broad arm-chairs in front of the fireplace; a capacious silver bowl made its appearance on the table, and, a few moments later, the flitting flame of rum announced to us our host's pleasant intention to "brew a punch."—Piótr Feódorovitch was a man not lacking in taste; he knew, for example, that nothing has such deadly effect on the fancy as the even, cold, and pedantic light of lamps—therefore he ordered that only two candles should be left in

the room. Strange half-shadows quivered on the walls, produced by the fitful play of the fire on the hearth, and the flame of the punch . . . . a quiet, extremely agreeable comfort replaced in our hearts the somewhat obstreperous jollity which had reigned at dinner.

Conversations have their fates—like books (according to the Latin apothegm), like everything in the world. Our conversation on that evening was peculiarly varied and vivacious. In part it rose to decidedly important general questions, then lightly and unconstrainedly returned to the commonplaces of everyday life. . . . After chatting a good deal, we all suddenly fell silent. At such times, they say, the angel of silence flits past.

I do not know why my companions ceased talking, but I stopped because my eyes had suddenly paused on three dusty portraits in black wooden frames. The colours had been rubbed off, and here and there the canvas was warped, but the faces could still be distinguished. The middle portrait represented a woman, young in years, in a white gown with lace borders, and a tall coiffure of the eighties. On her right, against a perfectly black background, was visible the round, fat face of a good-natured Russian landed proprietor five-and-twenty years of age, with a low, broad forehead, a stubby nose, and an ingenuous smile. The powdered French coiffure was extremely out of keeping with the expres-

sion of his Slavonic countenance. The artist had depicted him in a kaftan of crimson hue with large strass buttons; in his hand he held some sort of unusual flower. The third portrait, painted by another and more experienced hand, represented a man of thirty, in a green uniform of the period of Katherine II, with red facings, a white under-waistcoat, and a thin batiste neckerchief. With one hand he leaned on a cane with a gold head, the other he had thrust into his waistcoat. His thin, swarthy face breathed forth insolent arrogance. His long, slender eyebrows almost met over his pitch-black eyes; on his pale, barely-perceptible lips played an evil smile.

"What makes you stare at those faces?"—Piótr Feódorovitch asked me.

"Because!"—I answered, looking at him.

"Would you like to hear the whole story about those three persons?"

"Pray, do us the favour to tell it,"—we replied with one voice.

Piótr Feódorovitch rose, took a candle, raised it to the portraits, and in the voice of a man who is exhibiting wild animals, "Gentlemen!" he proclaimed: "this lady is the adopted daughter of my own great-grandfather, Olga Ivánovna NN., called Lutchínoff, who died unmarried forty years ago. This gentleman,"—pointing to the portrait of the man in uniform,—"is sergeant

of the Guards, Vasíly Ivánovitch Lutchínoff, who departed this life, by the will of God, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety. And this gentleman, to whom I have not the honour to be related, is a certain Pável Afanásievitch Rogatchyóff, who never served anywhere, so far as I am aware. Please to note the hole which is in his breast, in the exact place of the heart. This hole, which is, as you see, regular, and three-cornered, probably could not have happened accidentally. . . . Now,"—he went on in his ordinary voice,—"please to take your seats, arm yourselves with patience, and listen."

Gentlemen (he began) I descend from a fairly ancient race. I am not proud of my descent, because my ancestors were all frightful spendthrifts. This reproach, however, does not apply to my great-grandfather, Iván Andréevitch Lutchínoff,—on the contrary, he bore the reputation of being an extraordinarily penurious and even miserly man—during the last years of his life, at all events. He passed his youth in Petersburg, and was a witness of Elizavéta's reign. In Petersburg he married, and had by his wife, who was also my great-grandmother, four children—three sons, Vasíly, Iván and Pável (my grandfather), and one daughter, Natálya. In addition to these, Iván Andréevitch took into his family the daughter of a distant relative, a full

and nameless orphan,—Olga Ivánovna, of whom I have already spoken. My great-grandfather's subjects were, probably, aware of his existence, because they were in the habit of sending to him (when no particular catastrophe had happened) a very considerable sum in quit-rents;—but they had never beheld his face. The village of Lutchínovko, deprived of the light of its master's countenance, was thriving,—when, all of a sudden, one fine morning, a heavy travelling carriage drove into the village, and drew up in front of the Elder's cottage. The peasants, startled by such an unprecedented event, flocked thither and beheld their master, mistress, and all the pair's offspring, with the exception of the eldest, Vasíly, who had remained in Petersburg. From that memorable day forth, and to the very day of his death, Iván Andréevitch never quitted Lutchínovko. He built himself a house, this very house in which I now have the pleasure of chatting with you; he also built the church, and began to live the life of a landed proprietor. Iván Andréevitch was a man of huge stature, gaunt, taciturn, and extremely slow in all his movements; he never wore a dressing-gown, and no one, with the exception of his valet, had ever seen him with unpowdered hair. Iván Andréevitch habitually walked with his hands clasped behind his back, slowly turning his head at every step. Every day he walked in the long linden alley,

which he had planted with his own hands,—and before his death he had the satisfaction of enjoying the shade of those lindens.

Iván Andréevitch was extremely parsimonious of his words; this remarkable circumstance may serve as a proof of his taciturnity—that in the space of twenty years he never said a single word to his spouse, Anna Pávlovna. Altogether, his relations to Anna Pávlovna were of a very strange nature.—She administered all the domestic affairs, at dinner she always sat by her husband's side,—he would ruthlessly have chastised any man who presumed to utter one disrespectful word to her,—and yet he himself never spoke to her, and never touched her hand. Anna Pávlovna was a pale, timid, crushed woman; every day she prayed in church on her knees,[1] and never smiled. It was said that formerly, that is to say, before their arrival in the country, they had lived in grand style; it was said, also, that Anna Pávlovna had broken her marital vows, that her husband had found out about her fault. . . . However that may have been, Iván Andréevitch, even when he lay dying, did

[1] Except during Lent, and for special prayers on Christmas Day, New Year's Day and Pentecost (Trinity Sunday), hardly any kneeling is prescribed by the rubrics of the Eastern Catholic Church. During Easter-tide and on all Sundays it is forbidden by the rubrics, on the ground that joy in the resurrection should overpower the sense of sin and contrition. These rules are not always regarded. But a person who kneels much is conspicuous, and spectators assume that the posture indicates great grief or contrition—as above.—Translator.

not become reconciled to her. She never left him during his last illness; but he seemed not to notice her. One night, Anna Pávlovna was sitting in Iván Andréevitch's bedroom; he was tortured with insomnia; the shrine-lamp was burning in front of the holy picture; my great-grandfather's servant, Yúditch, concerning whom I shall have a couple of words to say to you hereafter, had left the room. Anna Pávlovna rose, crossed the chamber, and flung herself, sobbing, on her knees before her husband's bed, tried to say something—and stretched out her arms. . . . Iván Andréevitch looked at her—and shouted in a weak but firm voice: "Man!" The servant entered. Anna Pávlovna hastily rose to her feet, and returned, reeling, to her place.

Iván Andréevitch's children were extremely afraid of him. They grew up in the country, and were witnesses of Iván Andréevitch's strange behaviour to his wife. They all passionately loved Anna Pávlovna, but dared not express their love. She herself seemed to shun them. . . . You remember my grandfather, gentlemen: to the day of his death, he always used to go about on tiptoe, and he spoke in a whisper . . . . that 's what habit will do! My grandfather and his brother Iván Ivánovitch were plain, kind, peaceable and melancholy people; my *grand'tante* Natálya married a coarse, stupid man, as you know, and until her death cherished for him a

dumb, servile, sheep-like love; but their brother Vasíly was not like that.

I think I have told you that Iván Andréevitch left him in Petersburg. He was twenty years old at the time. His father confided him to the care of a distant relative, a man no longer young, a bachelor and a frightful Voltairian.

Vasíly grew up, and entered the service. He was small of stature, but well built and extremely agile; he spoke French splendidly, and was renowned for his skill at fighting with the broadsword. He was considered one of the most brilliant young men of the beginning of Katherine II's reign. My father often told me that he knew more than one old woman who could not mention Vasíly Ivánovitch Lutchínoff without heartfelt emotion. Picture to yourself a man gifted with remarkable strength of will, passionate and calculating, patient and daring, secretive to the last degree and—according to the words of all his contemporaries—bewitchingly, enchantingly amiable. He had neither conscience nor goodnature nor honour, although no one could call him a positively bad man. He was selfish—but knew how to conceal his selfishness, and was passionately fond of independence. When Vasíly Ivánovitch used, smilingly, to screw up his black eyes, when he wanted to fascinate any one, they say that it was impossible to resist him—and even people who were convinced of the coldness

and hardness of his spirit more than once surrendered to the bewitching power of his influence. He zealously served himself, and made others toil also for his benefit, and always succeeded in everything, because he never lost his head, did not disdain flattery as a means, and understood how to flatter.

Ten years after Iván Andréevitch settled in the country, he came to Lutchínovko as a brilliant officer of the Guards, for four months,—and in that space of time succeeded in turning the head even of the surly old man, his father. It is strange! Iván Andréevitch listened with delight to his son's tales of his conquests. His brothers were dumb in his presence, and admired him as a superior being. And even Anna Pávlovna herself came to love him almost more than all her other children, who were so sincerely devoted to her.

Vasíly Ivánovitch came to the country, in the first place, in order to see his relatives; but, in the second place also, in order to get as much money as possible out of his father. He had lived sumptuously and kept open house in Petersburg, and had contracted a multitude of debts. It was not easy for him to reconcile himself to his parent's stinginess, and, although Iván Andréevitch gave him for his trip alone more money, in all probability, than he gave all his other children in the space of the twenty years which they

spent in the paternal house, yet Vasíly stuck to the familiar Russian rule: "Take all you can get!"

Iván Andréevitch had a servant, Yúditch by name, as tall, gaunt, and taciturn a man as his master. They say that this Yúditch was, in part, the cause of the strange behaviour of Iván Andréevitch to Anna Pávlovna: they say that it was he who discovered the guilty liaison of my great-grandmother with one of my great-grandfather's best friends. Probably Yúditch deeply repented of his ill-judged zeal, because it would be difficult to conceive of a more kind-hearted man. His memory is held sacred to this day by all my house-serfs. Yúditch enjoyed the unbounded confidence of my great-grandfather. At that period, landed proprietors had money, but did not hand it over to loan institutions for safe-keeping, but kept it themselves in coffers, in cellars, and the like. Iván Andréevitch kept all his money in a huge iron-bound coffer, which stood under the head of his bed. The key to this coffer was handed over to Yúditch. Every evening, when he went to bed, Iván Andréevitch ordered this chest to be opened in his presence, tapped all the tightly-stuffed sacks in turn with his cane, and on Saturdays, he and Yúditch untied the sacks and carefully counted over the money.

Vasíly found out about all these performances

and was fired with a desire to rummage a bit in the sacred coffer. In the course of five or six days he *mollified* Yúditch, that is to say, he reduced the poor old fellow to such a state that—as the saying is—he fairly worshipped his young master. After having properly prepared him, Vasíly assumed a careworn and gloomy aspect, for a long time refused to answer Yúditch's inquiries and, at last, told him that he had gambled away all his money, and intended to lay violent hands on himself if he did not obtain money from somewhere. Yúditch began to sob, flung himself on his knees before him, begged him to remember God, not to ruin his soul. Vasíly, without uttering a word, locked himself up in his chamber. After a while, he heard some one knocking cautiously on his door. He opened the door and beheld on the threshold Yúditch, pale and trembling, with a key in his hands. Vasíly immediately understood everything. At first he resisted for a long time. Yúditch kept repeating with tears: "Pray, master, take it!" . . . At last, Vasíly consented. This happened on Monday. The idea occurred to Vasíly to replace the money he abstracted with bits of glass. He reckoned on Iván Andréevitch's not paying any special heed to the barely perceptible difference in the sound when he tapped the sacks with his cane,—and by Saturday he hoped to obtain money and replace it in the sacks. No sooner

thought than done. His father, in fact, did not notice anything. But Vasíly did not obtain money by Saturday: he had hoped, with the money he had taken, to clean out at the card-table a certain wealthy neighbour—and, on the contrary, he lost everything himself. In the meantime, Saturday arrived; the turn came for the sacks stuffed with bits of glass. Picture to yourselves, gentlemen, the amazement of Iván Andréevitch!

"What 's the meaning of this?"—he thundered.

Yúditch made no reply.

"Hast thou stolen this money?"

"No, sir."

"Then has some one taken the key from thee?"

"I have not given the key to any one."

"Not to any one? If thou hast not given it to any one—thou art the thief. Confess!"

"I am not a thief, Iván Andréevitch."

"Whence came these bits of glass, damn it? So thou art deceiving me? For the last time I say to thee—confess!"

Yúditch hung his head and clasped his hands behind his back.

"Hey there, people!" shouted Iván Andréevitch in a raging voice.—"The rods!"

"What? You mean to . . . . whip . . . me?" whispered Yúditch.

"Thou shalt catch it! And how art thou any

better than the rest? Thou art a thief! Well, now, Yúditch! I had not expected such rascality from thee!"

"I have grown grey in your service, Iván Andréevitch," said Yúditch with an effort.

"And what care I about thy grey hair? May the devil take thee and thy service!"

The people entered.

"Take him, and give him a good flogging!"

Iván Andréevitch's lips were pale and trembling. He ramped about the room like a wild beast in a confined cage.

The men did not dare to execute his commands.

"What are you standing there for, you vile serfs? have I got to lay hands on him myself, I 'd like to know?"

Yúditch started for the door.

"Stop!" yelled Iván Andréevitch.—"Yúditch, for the last time I say to thee, I entreat thee, Yúditch, confess."

"I cannot," moaned Yúditch.

"Then seize him, the old sycophant! . . . Flog him to death! On my head be it!" thundered the maddened old man. The torture began. . . .

Suddenly the door flew open, and Vasíly entered. He was almost paler than his father, his hands trembled, his upper lip was raised and disclosed a row of white, even teeth.

"I am guilty," he said in a dull but steady voice.—"I took the money."

The men stopped short.

"Thou! what? ! thou, Váska! without the consent of Yúditch?"

"No!"—said Yúditch:—"with my consent. I myself gave the key to Vasíly Ivánovitch. Dear little father, Vasíly Ivánovitch! why have you deigned to trouble yourself?"

"So that 's who the thief is!"—shouted Iván Andréevitch.—"Thanks, Vasíly, thanks! But I shall not spare thee, Yúditch, all the same. Why didst not thou confess all to me at once? Hey, there, you! why have you stopped? or do you no longer recognise my authority? And I 'll settle with you, my dear little dove!" he added, turning to Vasíly.

The men were on the point of setting to work again on Yúditch.

"Don't touch him!" whispered Vasíly through his teeth. The servants did not heed him. —"Back!" he shouted, and hurled himself upon them. . . . They staggered back.

"Ah! a rebel!"—moaned Iván Andréevitch, and raising his cane, he advanced on his son.

Vasíly leaped aside, grasped the hilt of his sword, and bared it half-way. All began to tremble. Anna Pávlovna, attracted by the noise, frightened and pale, made her appearance in the doorway.

Iván Andréevitch's face underwent a frightful change. He staggered, dropped his cane, and fell heavily into an arm-chair, covering his face with both hands. No one stirred; all stood as though rooted to the spot, not excepting even Vasíly. He convulsively gripped the steel hilt of his sword, his eyes flashed with a morose, evil gleam. . . .

"Go away all . . . begone,"—said Iván Andréevitch in a low voice, without removing his hands from his face.

The whole throng withdrew. Vasíly halted on the threshold, then suddenly tossed his head, embraced Yúditch, kissed his mother's hand . . . and two hours later he was no longer in the village. He had departed for Petersburg.

On the evening of that day, Yúditch was sitting on the porch of the house-serfs' cottage. The servants swarmed around him, pitied him, and bitterly blamed the master.

"Stop, my lads," he said to them at last;—"enough of that . . . . why do you abuse him? I don't believe that he, our dear little father, is pleased himself with his desperate deed. . . ."

As a result of this affair, Vasíly never saw his parents again. Iván Andréevitch died without him, probably with such grief at his heart as may God spare any of us from experiencing. In the meantime, Vasíly Ivánovitch went out in society, made merry after his own fashion, and squan-

dered money. How he obtained the money, I cannot say with certainty. He procured for himself a French servant, a clever and intelligent young fellow, a certain Boursier. This man became passionately attached to him, and aided him in all his numerous performances. I have no intention of narrating to you in detail all the pranks of my great-uncle; he distinguished himself by such unbounded audacity, such snaky tact, such incredible cold-bloodedness, such adroit and subtle wit, that, I must confess, I can understand the limitless power of that unprincipled man over the most noble souls. . . .

Soon after his father's death, Vasíly Ivánovitch, notwithstanding all his tact, was challenged to a duel by an outraged husband. He fought, severely wounded his antagonist, and was forced to quit the capital: he was ordered to reside permanently on his hereditary estate. Vasíly Ivánovitch was thirty years of age. You can easily imagine, gentlemen, with what feelings this man, who had become accustomed to the brilliant life of the capital, journeyed to his native place. They say that, on the road, he frequently got out of his kibítka, flung himself face down on the snow, and wept. No one in Lutchínovko recognised the former jolly, amiable Vasíly Ivánovitch. He spoke to no one, he went off hunting from morning until night, with visible impatience endured the timid caresses of his

mother, and jeered pitilessly at his brothers, and at their wives (both of them were already married). . . .

So far I have said nothing to you, I believe, about Olga Ivánovna. She had been brought to Lutchínovko as an infant at the breast; she had almost died on the way. Olga Ivánovna had been reared, as the saying is, in the fear of God and of her parents. . . . It must be confessed that Iván Andréevitch and Anna Pávlovna both treated her like a daughter. But there was concealed in her a feeble spark of that fire which blazed so brightly in the soul of Vasíly Ivánovitch. In the meantime, while Iván Andréevitch's own children did not dare to indulge in conjectures concerning the strange, speechless quarrel between their parents, Olga, from her earliest years had been disturbed and pained by the position of Anna Pávlovna. Like Vasíly, she loved independence; all oppression revolted her. She had attached herself to her benefactress with all the powers of her soul; she hated old Lutchínoff, and more than once, as she sat at table, she had fixed upon him such sombre glances, that even the man who was serving the viands felt frightened. Iván Andréevitch did not notice all those glances, because, in general, he paid no attention whatever to his family.

At first, Anna Pávlovna endeavoured to exterminate this hatred in her—but several bold

questions on Olga's part forced her to complete silence. Iván Andréevitch's children adored Olga, and the old woman loved her also, although with rather a cold affection.

Prolonged sorrow had crushed all cheerfulness, all strong feeling, in this poor woman; nothing so clearly proves Vasíly's bewitching amiability as the fact that he made even his mother love him ardently. Effusions of tenderness on the part of children was not in the spirit of that age, and therefore it is not surprising that Olga did not venture to display her devotion, although she always kissed Anna Pávlovna's hand with particular respect in the evening, when she bade her good-night. She was barely able to read and write. Twenty years later, Russian girls began to read novels in the style of the "Adventures of Marquis G***,"—"Fanfan and Lolotte,"—of "Alexyéi; or, The Cot in the Forest";—they began to learn to play on the clavichord and to sing romances in the style of the following, once very familiar song:

> "Men in the light
> Cling to us like flies"—and so forth.

But in the '70s (Olga Ivánovna was born in the year 1757), our rustic beauties had no conception of all these accomplishments. It would be difficult for us now to picture to ourselves a

young Russian girl of good birth of that epoch. We can, it is true, judge from our grandmothers as to the degree of education of noble gentlewomen in the times of Katherine II; but how is one to distinguish that which was inculcated in them in the course of their long life, from that which they were in the days of their youth?

Olga Ivánovna spoke a little French, but with a strong Russian accent; in her day, there was no thought of such a thing as the *emigrés*.[1] In a word, with all her good qualities, she was, nevertheless, a decided *savage*, and, probably, in the simplicity of her heart, she more than once administered chastisement with her own hands to some unlucky maid. . . .

Some time before Vasíly Ivánovitch's arrival, Olga Ivánovna had been betrothed to a neighbour,—Pável Afanásievitch Rogatchyóff, an extremely good-natured and honourable man. Nature had forgotten to endow him with gall. His own servants did not obey him; they sometimes all went off, from the first to the last of them, and left poor Rogatchyóff without any dinner . . . but nothing could disturb the tranquillity of his soul. He had been distinguished, even from his childhood, by his obesity and sluggishness; he had never served anywhere, and he was

[1] Many exiles caused by the French Revolution found refuge in Russia as tutors. Some founded families there, intermarrying with Russians, and their Russified names are easily recognisable.—TRANSLATOR.

fond of going to church and singing in the choir. Look at that good-natured, round face, gentlemen; gaze at that tranquil, brilliant smile . . . . does not it make you feel cheerful yourselves? Once in a while his father had driven over to Lutchínovko, and had brought with him, on festival days, his Pávlusha, whom the little Lutchínoffs tormented in every possible way. Pávlusha grew up, began to go to Iván Andréevitch's of his own accord, fell in love with Olga Ivánovna, and offered her his hand and his heart—not to her personally, but to her benefactors. Her benefactors gave their consent. They never even thought of asking Olga Ivánovna whether she liked Rogatchyóff. At that epoch,—as our grandmothers used to say,—"such luxuries were not in fashion." But Olga speedily got used to her betrothed: it was impossible not to grow attached to that gentle, indulgent being.

Rogatchyóff had received no education whatsoever; all he could say in French was "bonzhour"—and in secret he even regarded that word as improper. And some jester had also taught him the following, which professed to be a French song: "Sónetchka, Sónetchka! Que voulez-vous de moi—I adore you—mais je ne peux pas." . . . He was always humming this song in an undertone when he felt in good spirits. His father also was a man of indescribably kind disposition; he was forever going about in a long

nankeen coat, and no matter what was said to him, he assented to everything with a smile.

From the time of Pável Afanásievitch's betrothal both the Rogatchyóffs—father and son—began to bustle about frightfully; they made over their house, they built on various "galleries," they chatted in friendly wise with the workmen, they treated them to vodka. They did not manage to finish all the additional building by winter—so they deferred the wedding until the summer; in the summer, Iván Andréevitch died—and the wedding was postponed until the following spring; in the winter, Vasíly Ivánovitch arrived. Rogatchyóff was introduced to him; Vasíly received him coldly and carelessly, and in the course of time, frightened him to such a degree by his arrogant treatment that poor Rogatchyóff quivered like a leaf at his mere appearance, maintained silence, and smiled constrainedly. Vasíly once came near driving him off for good—by offering to bet with him that he, Rogatchyóff, was unable to stop smiling. Poor Pável Afanásievitch almost wept with confusion, but—'t is an actual fact!—the smile, the very stupid, constrained smile, would not quit his face! And Vasíly slowly toyed with the ends of his neckcloth, and stared at him in quite too scornful a manner.

Pável Afanásievitch's father also learned of Vasíly's arrival, and a few days later—for the sake of "the greater solemnity"—he set out for

Lutchínovko with the intention of "congratulating the amiable visitor on his arrival in his native parts." Afanásy Afanásievitch was renowned throughout the whole countryside for his eloquence—that is to say, for his ability to utter, without hesitation, a rather long and cunningly-concocted speech, with a slight admixture of bookish words. Alas! on this occasion he did not maintain his reputation; he became confused much worse than his son, Pável Afanásievitch. He stammered out something very unintelligible, and, although he had never touched vodka in his life, having this time, "by way of countenance," drunk a small glassful (he had found Vasíly at luncheon), he had endeavoured, at least, to clear his throat with a certain amount of independence, and had not produced the smallest sound. As he set out for home, Pável Afanásievitch whispered to his parent: "Well, dear little father?" Afanásy Lúkitch replied to him with irritation, also in a whisper: "Don't mention it!"

The Rogatchyóffs began to come more rarely to Lutchínovko. But they were not the only ones whom Vasíly intimidated: he aroused in his brothers, in their wives, even in Anna Pávlovna herself, a painful and involuntary sense of discomfort . . . . they began to avoid him in all possible ways. Vasíly could not help noticing this, but, apparently, he had no intention of altering his behaviour to them, when, all of a sud-

den, at the beginning of the spring, he again revealed himself as the same amiable, charming man they had previously known him to be. . . .

The first revelation of this sudden change was on the occasion of Vasíly's unexpected call on the Rogatchyóff's. Afanásy Lúkitch, in particular, was thoroughly daunted by the sight of Lutchínoff's calash, but his fear very speedily vanished. Never had Vasíly been more amiable and merry. He linked his arm in the arm of young Rogatchyóff, walked out with him to inspect the buildings, chatted with the carpenters, gave them advice, himself made a few notches with the axe, ordered them to show him Afanásy Lúkitch's stud-horses, himself drove them at the end of a rope—and altogether, by his cordial amiability, reduced the kind-hearted steppe-dwellers to such a condition that they both repeatedly embraced him. At home, also, Vasíly turned all heads for a few days as of yore: he devised various amusing games, he procured musicians, invited in the neighbours of both sexes, narrated the tittle-tattle of the town to the old ladies in the most diverting manner, paid some court to the young women, invented unheard-of amusements, fireworks, and so forth:—in a word, he enlivened everything and everybody. The sad, gloomy house of the Lutchínoffs was suddenly converted into a noisy, brilliant, enchanting sort of dwelling, of which the whole countryside talked.—This sudden change

amazed many, delighted all, and various rumours got into circulation; the knowing ones said that some hidden trouble had, up to that time, been afflicting Vasíly Ivánovitch, that the possibility of returning to the capital had presented itself to him. . . . But no one divined the true cause of Vasíly Ivánovitch's regeneration.

Olga Ivánovna, gentlemen, was very far from being uncomely.—But her beauty consisted rather in remarkable softness and freshness of person, in a tranquil charm of movement, than in strict regularity of features. Nature had endowed her with a certain independence; her education—she had been reared an orphan—had developed in her caution and firmness. Olga did not belong to the category of quiet and languid young gentlewomen; but one feeling alone had fully ripened in her: hatred for her benefactor. However, other and more womanly passions also could flame up in Olga Ivánovna's soul with unusual, unhealthy force . . . . but there was in her none of that proud coldness, nor that compact strength of soul, nor that selfish concentration, without which every passion speedily vanishes.—The first outbursts of such half-active, half-passive souls are sometimes remarkably violent; but they very soon undergo a change, especially when it becomes a question of the ruthless application of accepted principles; they fear the consequences. . . . And, yet, gentlemen, I must con-

fess to you frankly: women of that sort produce upon me a very strong impression. . . .

(At these words, the narrator tossed off a glass of water at one draught.—"Nonsense! nonsense!"—I thought, as I looked at his round chin: —"on you, my dear friend, no one in the world produces 'a very strong impression.'") . . .

Pëtr Feódorovitch went on:

Gentlemen, I believe in blood, in race. There was more blood in Olga Iványovna, than, for example, in her nominal sister—Natálya. How did that "blood" show itself?—you ask me.—Why, in everything; in the outline of her hands and of her lips, in the sound of her voice, in her glance, in her walk, in the way she dressed her hair,—in the folds of her gown, in short. In all these trifles there was a certain hidden something, although I must admit that that . . . . how shall I express it? . . . . that distinction which had fallen to the lot of Olga Iványovna would not have attracted the attention of Vasíly if he had met her in Petersburg. But in the country, in the wilds, she not only excited his attention,—but even, altogether, was the sole cause of the change of which I have just spoken.

Judge for yourselves: Vasíly Iványovitch was fond of enjoying life; he could not help being bored in the country; his brothers were kind-hearted fellows, but extremely limited in mind;

he had nothing in common with them. His sister Natálya and her husband had had four children in the space of three years; between her and Vasíly lay a whole abyss. . . Anna Pávlovna went to church, prayed, fasted, and prepared herself for death. There remained only Olga, a rosy, timid, charming young girl. . . At first Vasíly did not notice her . . . and who would turn his attention on an adopted child, an orphan, a foundling? . . . . One day, at the very beginning of spring, he was walking through the garden, and with his cane switching off the heads of the chicory, those stupid yellow flowers which make their appearance in such abundance first of all, in the meadows as yet hardly green.—He was strolling in the garden in front of the house, raised his head—and beheld Olga Ivánovna.—She was sitting with her side to the window, and gazing pensively at a striped kitten, which, purring and blinking, had cuddled down on her lap, and with great satisfaction was presenting its little nose to the spring sunshine, already fairly brilliant. Olga Ivánovna wore a white morning-gown with short sleeves; her bare, faintly-rosy, as yet not fully-developed shoulders and arms breathed forth freshness and health; a small cap discreetly confined her thick, soft, silky locks; her face was slightly flushed; she had not been long awake. Her slender, supple neck was bent forward so charmingly; her unconfined form re-

posed so engagingly and modestly that Vasíly Ivánovitch (a great connoisseur!) involuntarily halted and took a look. It suddenly came into his head that Olga Ivánovna ought not to be left in her pristine ignorance, that in time she might turn out to be a very charming and very amiable woman. He crept up to the window, raised himself on tiptoe, and imprinted a silent kiss on Olga Ivánovna's smooth, white arm, a little below the elbow.—Olga screamed and sprang to her feet, the kitten elevated its tail, and leaped into the garden; Vasíly Ivánovitch detained her with his hand. . . . Olga blushed all over, to her very ears; he began to jest at her fright . . . . invited her to walk with him; but suddenly Olga Ivánovna noticed the negligence of her attire—"more swiftly than the swift-footed doe," she slipped into the next room.

That same day, Vasíly set off for the Rogatchyóff's'. He suddenly grew gay, and brightened up in spirit. Vasíly did not fall in love with Olga, no!—one must not trifle with the word love. . . . He had found for himself an occupation, he had set himself a task, and was rejoicing with the joy of an active man. He never even called to mind the fact that she was his mother's adopted child, the betrothed of another man; he did not deceive himself for a single instant; he was very well aware that she could not be his wife. . . . Perhaps passion was his excuse—not a lofty, not a noble pas-

sion, 't is true, but, nevertheless, a tolerably strong and torturing passion. Of course he did not fall in love like a child; he did not surrender himself to unbounded raptures; he knew well what he wanted and what he was aiming at.

Vasíly Ivánovitch possessed to perfection the ability to win the favour of others, even of those who were prejudiced or timid. Olga speedily ceased to shun him. Vasíly Ivánovitch introduced her into a new world. He imported a clavichord for her, gave her music lessons (he played very fairly himself on the flute), he read books to her, he had long talks with her. . . . The poor young steppe-girl's head was turned; Vasíly had completely subjugated her. He knew how to talk to her about that which, hitherto, had been foreign to her, and to talk in a language which she understood. Olga gradually brought herself to express all her feelings to him; he helped her, suggested to her the words which she could not find; he did not startle her; he now repressed, now encouraged her impulses. . . . Vasíly occupied himself with her education not out of a disinterested desire to awaken and develop her abilities; he simply wanted to bring her somewhat closer to him, and he knew, moreover, that it is easier to attract an inexperienced, shy, but vain young girl by the mind than by the heart. Even if Olga had been a remarkable being, Vasíly could not possibly have observed it, because he treated

her like a child; but you already know, gentlemen, that there was nothing noteworthy about Olga.

Vasíly strove, as much as possible, to work on her imagination, and often of an evening she would leave him with such a whirl of new images, words, and thoughts in her head, that she was unable to get to sleep until dawn, and sighing sadly, she pressed her burning cheeks against her cold pillows; or she rose and went to the window, and gazed timorously and eagerly into the far-away gloom. Vasíly filled every moment of her life; she could not think of any one else. She soon ceased to take any notice of Rogatchyóff. Vasíly, being a shrewd and clever man, did not speak to Olga in his presence; but he either confused him to the verge of tears, or got up some boisterous game, a stroll in the evening, a rowing-party on the river by night with lanterns and music,—in a word, he did not give Pável Afanásievitch a chance to recover his ground. But, despite all Vasíly Ivánovitch's cleverness, Rogatchyóff was dimly conscious that he, the betrothed and the future husband of Olga, had become, as it were, a stranger to her . . . . but, in his infinite good-heartedness, he was afraid of wounding her by a reproach, although he really loved her and prized her affection. When he was alone with her, he did not know what to talk about, and merely endeavoured to serve her in every possible way. Two months passed. Every

trace of independence, of will, disappeared in Olga; the weak and taciturn Rogatchyóff could not serve her as a prop; she did not even try to resist the fascination, and with a sinking heart she gave herself unconditionally to Vasíly. . . .

Olga Ivánovna, it is probable, then learned the joys of love; but not for long. Although Vasíly —for the lack of any other occupation—not only did not discard her, but even became attached to her, and petted her, yet Olga lost herself to such a degree that she did not find bliss even in love, and nevertheless she was unable to tear herself away from Vasíly. She began to be afraid of everything, she did not dare to think; she talked of nothing; she ceased to read; she became a prey to melancholy. Sometimes Vasíly succeeded in drawing her after him, and making her forget everybody and everything; but on the following day he found her pale and silent, with cold hands, with a senseless smile on her lips. . . .

A decidedly difficult time began for Vasíly; but no difficulties could daunt him. He concentrated himself completely, like an expert gambler. He could not count upon Olga Ivánovna in the slightest degree; she was incessantly betraying herself, paling, and blushing and weeping . . . her new rôle was beyond her strength. Vasíly toiled for two; in his boisterous and noisy joy only an experienced observer could have detected a feverish tenseness; he played with his

brothers, his sisters, the Rogatchyóff's, the neighbours, both men and women,—as though they had been pawns; he was eternally on the alert, he never allowed a single glance, a single movement to escape him, although he appeared to be the most care-free of mortals; every morning he entered into battle, and every evening he celebrated a victory. He was not in the least oppressed by this strange activity; he slept four hours a day, he ate very little, and was healthy, fresh, and gay. In the meantime, the wedding-day was approaching; Vasíly succeeded in convincing Pável Afanásievitch himself of the necessity of a postponement; then he despatched him to Moscow to make some purchases, and himself entered into correspondence with his Petersburg friends. He exerted himself not so much out of compassion for Olga Ivánovna, as out of a desire and love for fuss and bustle. . . . Moreover, he had begun to grow tired of Olga Ivánovna, and more than once already, after a fierce outburst of passion, he had looked at her as he had been wont to look at Rogatchyóff. Lutchínoff always remained a puzzle to every one; in the very coldness of his implacable spirit you felt conscious of the presence of a strange, almost southern flame, and in the maddest heat of passion, cold emanated from that man.—In the presence of others, he upheld Olga Ivánovna as before; but when he was alone with her, he played with her

as a cat plays with a mouse—he either terrified her with sophisms, or he exhibited heavy and vicious tedium, or, in conclusion, he threw himself at her feet again, swept her away, as a whirlwind sweeps a chip . . . . and he was not then pretending to be in love . . . but really was swooning with it himself. . .

One day, quite late in the evening, Vasíly was sitting alone in his own room and attentively perusing the latest letters he had received from Petersburg—when, suddenly, the door creaked softly and Paláshka, Olga Ivánovna's maid, entered.

"What dost thou want?"—Vasíly asked her, quite curtly.

"My mistress begs that you will come to her."

"I can't at present. Go away. . . Well, why dost thou stand there?"—he went on, perceiving that Paláshka did not leave the room.

"My mistress ordered me to say that there is very great need, sir."

"Well, but what 's the matter?"

"Please to see for yourself, sir. . . ."

Vasíly rose, with vexation tossed the letters into a casket, and betook himself to Olga Ivánovna. She was sitting alone in a corner,—pale and motionless.

"What do you want?"—he asked her, not very politely.

Olga looked at him, and with a shudder, covered her eyes.

"What ails you? what 's the matter with thee, Olga?"

He took her hand. . . Olga Ivánovna's hand was as cold as ice. . . She tried to speak . . . . and her voice died away. The poor woman had no doubt left in her mind as to her condition.

Vasíly was somewhat disconcerted. Olga Ivánovna's room was a couple of paces from the bedroom of Anna Pávlovna. Vasíly cautiously seated himself beside Olga, kissed and warmed her hands, and argued with her in a whisper. She listened to him, and shivered silently, slightly. Paláshka stood in the doorway and softly wiped away her tears. In the adjoining room a pendulum was beating heavily and regularly, and the breathing of a sleeper was audible. Olga Ivánovna's torpor dissolved, at last, in tears and dull sobs. Tears are the equivalent of a thunderstorm: after them a person is always quieter. When Olga Ivánovna had become somewhat composed, and only sobbed convulsively from time to time like a child, Vasíly knelt down before her, and with caresses and tender promises soothed her completely, gave her a drink of water, put her to bed, and went away. All night long he did not undress himself, wrote two or three letters, burned two or three papers, got out a golden locket with the portrait of a black-browed and

black-eyed woman, with a bold, sensual face, gazed long at her features, and paced his chamber in thought. On the following morning, at tea, he beheld, with a good deal of dissatisfaction, poor Olga's reddened, swollen eyes, and pale, distraught face. After breakfast, he proposed to her that she should take a stroll with him in the park. Olga followed Vasíly like an obedient sheep. But when, two hours later, she returned from the park, she looked dreadfully; she told Anna Pávlovna that she felt ill, and went to bed. During the walk, Vasíly had announced to her, with all due penitence, that he was secretly married—he was just as much a bachelor as I am. Olga Ivánovna did not fall down in a swoon —people fall in swoons only on the stage; but she became suddenly petrified, although she not only had not been hoping to marry Vasíly Ivánovitch, but had even, somehow, been afraid to think of it. Vasíly began to demonstrate to her the necessity of parting from him and marrying Rogatchyóff. Olga Ivánovna looked at him with dumb horror. Vasíly talked coldly, practically, sensibly; he blamed himself, he expressed regret,—but all his arguments wound up with the following words: "We must act." Olga lost her head completely; she was frightened and ashamed; dismal, heavy despair took possession of her; she longed for death—and sadly awaited Vasíly's decision.

"We must confess all to my mother," he said at last.

Olga turned deadly pale; her limbs gave way beneath her.

"Don't be frightened, don't be frightened," —Vasíly kept repeating:—"rely on me; I will not forsake thee . . . I will arrange everything . . . trust in me."

The poor woman gazed at him with love . . . yes, with love, and with profound, though hopeless devotion.

"I will arrange everything, everything,"— said Vasíly to her at parting . . . and for the last time kissed her ice-cold hands.

Olga Iványovna had just risen from her bed on the following morning, when her door opened . . . and Anna Pávlovna made her appearance on the threshold. She was supported by Vasíly. Silently she made her way to an arm-chair, and silently seated herself. Vasíly stood beside her. He seemed composed; his brows were contracted, and his lips were slightly parted. Anna Pávlovna, pale, indignant, wrathful, tried to speak, but her voice failed her. Olga Iványovna with terror, took in, in a single glance, her benefactress and her lover; she felt a frightful sinking at the heart . . . with a shriek she fell down on her knees in the middle of the room and covered her face with her hands. . . .

"So it is true . . . it is true?" whispered

Anna Pávlovna, and bent toward her. . . . "Answer!"—she went on harshly, seizing Olga by the arm.

"Mamma!" rang out Vasíly's brazen voice,—"you promised me not to insult her."

"I won't . . . come, confess . . . . confess . . . is it true? Is it true?"

"Mamma . . . remember! . . ." said Vasíly, slowly.

That one word shook Anna Pávlovna violently. She leaned against the back of her chair, and fell to sobbing.

Olga Ivánovna softly raised her head and attempted to fling herself at the old woman's feet, but Vasíly restrained her, raised her up, and seated her in another arm-chair. Anna Pávlovna continued to weep and whisper incoherent words. . . .

"Listen, mamma,"—began Vasíly. "Don't be so overwhelmed! This calamity can still be alleviated. . . . If Rogatchyóff . . . ."

Olga Ivánovna shuddered and straightened herself up.

"If Rogatchyóff,"—pursued Vasíly, with a significant glance at Olga Ivánovna,—"has imagined that he can with impunity disgrace an honourable family . . . ."

Olga Ivánovna was terrified.

"In my house,"—moaned Anna Pávlovna.

"Calm yourself, mamma. He has taken ad-

vantage of her inexperience, of her youth, he . . . . did you wish to say something?"—he added, perceiving that Olga was trying to get at him.

Olga Ivánovna fell back in her chair.

"I shall go at once to Rogatchyóff. I shall force him to wed her this very day. Be assured, I shall not permit him to jeer at us. . . ."

"But . . . Vasíly Ivánovitch . . . you . . ." whispered Olga.

He stared long and coldly at her. She relapsed into silence.

"Mamma, give me your word not to disturb her until my arrival. See—she is barely alive. Yes, and you require rest yourself. Trust to me: I answer for everything; in any case, await my return. I repeat to you—do not kill her, nor yourself—rely upon me."

He walked to the door, and paused.

"Mamma,"—he said: "come with me. Leave her alone, I beg of you."

Anna Pávlovna rose, went to the holy picture, made a reverence to the floor, and softly followed her son. Olga Ivánovna followed her silently and immovably with her eyes. Vasíly hastily came back, seized her hand, whispered in her ear: "Trust to me, and do not betray us,"—and immediately withdrew. . . .

"Boursier!" he shouted, as he ran swiftly down the stairs.—"Boursier!"

A quarter of an hour later he was seated in his calash with his servant.

Old Rogatchyóff was not at home that day. He had gone to the county town, to buy seersucker for kaftans to clothe his retainers. Pável Afanásievitch was sitting in his study, and inspecting a collection of faded butterflies. Elevating his eyebrows, and thrusting forth his lips, he was cautiously turning about with a pin the large wings of the "nocturnal sphinx," when suddenly, he felt a small but heavy hand on his shoulder. He glanced round—before him stood Vasíly.

"Good morning, Vasíly Ivánovitch,"—said he, not without some surprise.

Vasíly looked at him and sat down in front of him on a chair.

Pável Afanásievitch was about to smile . . . but glanced at Vasíly, relaxed, opened his mouth, and clasped his hands.

"Come, tell me, Pável Afanásievitch,"—began Vasíly, suddenly:—"do you intend to have the wedding soon?"

"I? . . . soon . . . . of course. . . . I, so far as I am concerned . . . . however, that is as you and your sister choose. . . . I, for my part, am ready to-morrow, if you like."

"Very good, very good. You are a very impatient man, Pável Afanásievitch."

"How so, sir?"

"Listen,"—added Vasíly Ivánovitch, rising to his feet:—"I know everything; you understand me, and I order you to marry Olga without delay, to-morrow."

"But excuse me, excuse me,"—returned Rogatchyóff, without rising from his seat;—"you order me? I myself have sought the hand of Olga Ivánovna, and there is no need to order me. I must confess, Vasíly Ivánovitch, somehow, I don't understand you. . . ."

"Thou dost not understand?"

"No, really, I don't understand, sir."

"Wilt thou give me thy word to marry her to-morrow?"

"Why, good gracious, Vasíly Ivánovitch . . . . have n't you yourself repeatedly postponed our marriage? If it had not been for you, it would have taken place long ago. And even now I have no idea of refusing. But what is the meaning of your threats, of your urgent demands?"

Pável Afanásievitch wiped the perspiration from his face.

"Wilt thou give me thy word? Speak! Yes, or no?"—repeated Vasíly with pauses between his words.

"Certainly . . . I give it, sir, but . . . ."

"Good. Remember. . . . And she has confessed everything."

"Who has confessed?"

"Olga Ivánovna."

"But what has she confessed?"

"Why do you dissimulate with me, Pável Afanásievitch? Surely, I 'm not a stranger to you."

"How am I dissimulating? I don't understand you, I don't understand you, positively I don't understand you. What could Olga Ivánovna confess?"

"What? You bore me! You know well what."

"May God slay me if . . . ."

"No, I will slay thee—if thou dost not marry her . . . . dost understand?"

"What! . . . ." Pável Afanásievitch leaped to his feet, and stood before Vasíly.—"Olga Ivánovna . . . . you say . . . ."

"Thou 'rt clever, my good fellow, very clever, I must admit." Vasíly, with a smile, tapped him on the shoulder.—"In spite of the fact that thou art so mild of aspect . . . ."

"My God, O God! . . . You will drive me mad. . . What do you mean to say? Explain yourself, for God's sake!"

Vasíly bent over him and whispered something in his ear.

Rogatchyóff cried out:—"What? . . . . how?"

Vasíly stamped his foot.

"Olga Ivánovna? Olga? . . ."

"Yes . . . . your betrothed bride. . . ."

"My betrothed bride . . . . Vasíly Ivánovitch . . . . she . . . . she . . . . But I will have no-

thing to do with her!"—shouted Pável Afanásievitch. "I 'll have none of her! What do you take me for? To deceive me—to deceive me! . . . Olga Ivánovna, is n't it sinful of you, are n't you ashamed? . . . ." (Tears gushed from his eyes.)—"I thank you, Vasíly Ivánovitch, I thank you. . . . And now I 'll have nothing to do with her! I won't! I won't! don't speak of such a thing! . . . . Akh, good heavens!—that I should have lived to see this day! But it is well, it is well!"

"Stop behaving like a baby,"—remarked Vasíly Ivánovitch, coldly.—"Remember, you have given me your word that the wedding shall take place to-morrow."

"No, that shall not be! Enough, Vasíly Ivánovitch, I say to you once more—for whom do you take me? You do me much honour; many thanks, sir. Excuse me, sir."

"As you like!"—retorted Vasíly.—"Get your sword."

"Why?"

"This is why."

Vasíly drew out his slender, flexible French sword, and bent it slightly against the floor.

"You mean . . . . to fight . . . . with me? . . ."

"Precisely so."

"But, Vasíly Ivánovitch, pray, enter into my position! How can I—judge for yourself—after what you have told me? . . . I am

an honest man, Vasíly Ivánovitch; I am a nobleman."

"You are a nobleman, you are an honest man,—then be so good as to fight with me."

"Vasíly Ivánovitch!"

"You appear to be a coward, Mr. Rogatchyóff?"

"I am not in the least a coward, Vasíly Ivánovitch. You have thought to frighten me, Vasíly Ivánovitch. 'Come, now,' you said to yourself, 'I 'll scare him, and he 'll turn cowardly; he will instantly consent to anything.' . . . . No, Vasíly Ivánovitch, I 'm the same sort of nobleman as yourself, although I have not received my education in the capital, it is true; and you will not succeed in terrifying me, excuse me."

"Very good,"—retorted Vasíly:—"where is your sword?"

"Eróshka!"—shouted Pável Afanásievitch.

A man entered.

"Get my sword—yonder—thou knowest where it is—in the garret . . . . and be quick about it. . . ."

Eróshka withdrew. Pável Afanásievitch suddenly turned extremely pale, hastily took off his dressing-gown, put on a kaftan of a reddish hue with large strass buttons . . . . wound a neckcloth round his neck. . . . Vasíly watched him, and examined the fingers of his right hand.

"So how is it to be? Are we to fight, Pável Afanásievitch?"

"If we must fight, we must,"—returned Rogatchyóff, hastily buttoning his waistcoat.

"Hey, Pável Afanásievitch, heed my advice: marry . . . . why shouldst thou not? . . . But I, believe me . . . ."

"No, Vasíly Ivánovitch,"—Rogatchyóff interrupted him. "You will either kill me or maim me, I know; but I have no intention of losing my honour: if I must die, I will."

Eróshka entered and hurriedly handed Rogatchyóff a wretched little old sword, in a cracked, leather scabbard. At that time all nobles wore swords when they had powdered hair; but the nobles of the steppes only powdered their hair a couple of times a year. Eróshka retreated to the door, and fell to weeping. Pável Afanásievitch thrust him out of the room.

"But, Vasíly Ivánovitch,"—he remarked, with some agitation,—"I cannot fight with you instantly: permit me to defer our duel until tomorrow; my father is not at home; and it would not be a bad thing to put my affairs in order, in case of a catastrophe."

"I see that you are beginning to quail again, my dear sir."

"No, no, Vasíly Ivánovitch; but judge for yourself. . . ."

"Listen!" . . . shouted Lutchínoff:—"you are driving me out of patience. . . . Either give me your word to marry immediately, or fight

. . . . or I will trounce you with a cudgel, like a coward, do you understand?"

"Let us go into the park,"—replied Rogatchyóff between his teeth.

But suddenly the door opened, and the old nurse Efímovna, all dishevelled, forced her way into the room, fell on her knees before Rogatchyóff and clasped his feet. . . .

"My dear little father!"—she wailed:—"my child . . . . what is this thou art projecting? Do not ruin us miserable ones, dear little father! For he will kill thee, my dear little dove! But only give us the command, give us the command, and we 'll kill that insolent fellow with our caps. . . . Pável Afanásievitch, my darling child, have the fear of God before thine eyes!"

A multitude of pale and agitated faces showed themselves in the doorway . . . . the red beard of the Elder even made its appearance. . . .

"Let me go, Efímovna, let me go!"—muttered Rogatchyóff.

"I will not let thee go, my own one, I will not let thee go. What art thou doing, dear little father, what art thou doing? And what will Afanásy Lúkitch say? Why, he will drive all of us out of the white world. . . . And why do ye stand there? Seize the unbidden guest by the arms, and lead him forth from the house, that no trace of him may remain. . . ."

"Rogatchyóff!"—shouted Vasíly Ivánovitch, menacingly.

"Thou hast gone crazy, Efímovna, thou art disgracing me," . . . . said Pável Afanásievitch. —"Go away, go, with God's blessing, and begone, all of you, do you hear? Do you hear? . . ."

Vasíly Ivánovitch walked swiftly to the open window, drew out a small silver whistle, and whistled lightly. . . . Boursier answered close at hand. Lutchínoff immediately turned to Pável Afanásievitch.

"How is this comedy to end?"

"Vasíly Ivánovitch, I will come to you tomorrow—what am I to do with this crazy woman? . . . ."

"Eh! I see that it is useless to talk long with you,"—said Vasíly, and swiftly raised his cane. . . .

Pável Afanásievitch dashed forward, thrust aside Efímovna, seized his sword, and rushed through the other door into the park.

Vasíly darted after him. They both ran to a wooden arbour artfully painted in the Chinese manner, locked themselves in, and bared their swords. Rogatchyóff had once upon a time taken lessons in fencing; but he barely knew how to parry properly. The blades crossed. Vasíly was, evidently, playing with Rogatchyóff's sword. Pável Afanásievitch sighed, turned pale, and gazed with consternation into Lutchínoff's face. In the

meanwhile, cries resounded in the park; a throng of people rushed to the arbour. Suddenly Rogatchyóff heard a heart-rending, senile roar .... he recognised his father's voice. Afanásy Lúkitch, hatless, and with dishevelled locks, was running in front of all, waving his arms despairingly. ....

With a powerful and unexpected turn of his blade, Vasíly knocked the sword from Pável Afanásievitch's hand.

"Marry, brother,"—he said to him.—"Stop being a fool!"

"I will not marry!"—whispered Rogatchyóff, closed his eyes, and trembled all over.

Afanásy Lúkitch began to pound on the door of the arbour.

"Thou wilt not?"—shouted Vasíly.

Rogatchyóff shook his head in the negative.

"Well, then, the devil take thee!"

Poor Pável Afanásievitch fell dead: Lutchínoff's sword had pierced his heart. . . . The door burst open, old Rogatchyóff rushed into the arbour, but Vasíly had already managed to spring out of the window. . .

Two hours later, he entered Olga Ivánovna's room. . . She darted to meet him in affright. . . . He silently bowed to her, drew out his sword, and pierced Pável Afanásievitch's portrait at the place of the heart. Olga shrieked, and fell senseless on the floor. . . . Vasíly directed his

steps to Anna Pávlovna. He found her in the room of the holy pictures.

"Mamma,"—he said,—"we are avenged."

The poor old woman shuddered and went on praying.

A week later, Vasíly took his departure for Petersburg,—and two years afterward he returned to the country, crippled with paralysis, and speechless. He no longer found either Anna Pávlovna or Olga Ivánovna alive, and soon died himself in the arms of Yúditch, who fed him like a baby, and was the only person who could understand his incoherent babble.

THREE MEETINGS

(1851)

THREE MEETINGS

I

Passa que' colli e vieni allegramente;
Non ti curar di tanta compania—
Vieni pensando a me segretamente—
Ch'io t' accompagna per tutta la via.[1]

DURING the whole course of the summer, I had gone a-hunting nowhere so frequently as to the large village of Glínnoe, situated twenty versts from my hamlet. In the environs of this village there are, in all probability, the very best haunts of game in all our county. After having tramped through all the adjacent bush-plots and fields, I invariably, toward the end of the day, turned aside into the neighbouring marsh, almost the only one in the countryside, and thence returned to my cordial host, the Elder of Glínnoe, with whom I always stopped. It is not more than two versts from the marsh to Glínnoe; the entire road runs through a valley, and only midway of the distance is one compelled to cross a small hillock. On the crest of this hillock lies a homestead, consisting of one uninhabited little

[1] Pass through these hills and come cheerily to me: care thou not for too great a company. Come thou, and think secretly of me, that I may be thy comrade all the way.

manor-house and a garden. It almost always happened that I passed it at the very acme of the sunset glow, and I remember, that on every such occasion, this house, with its hermetically-sealed windows, appeared to me like a blind old man who had come forth to warm himself in the sunlight. He is sitting, dear man, close to the highway; the splendour of the sunlight has long since been superseded for him by eternal gloom; but he feels it, at least, on his upturned and outstretched face, on his flushed cheeks. It seemed as though no one had lived in the house itself for a long time; but in a tiny detached wing, in the courtyard, lodged a decrepit man who had received his freedom, tall, stooping, and grey-haired, with expressive and impassive features. He was always sitting on a bench in front of the wing's solitary little window, gazing with sad pensiveness into the distance, and when he caught sight of me, he rose a little way and saluted, with that deliberate gravity which distinguishes old house-serfs who have belonged not to the generation of our fathers, but to our grandfathers. I sometimes entered into conversation with him, but he was not loquacious; all I learned from him was that the farm on which he dwelt belonged to the granddaughter of his old master, a widow, who had a younger sister; that both of them lived in towns, and beyond the sea, and never showed themselves at home; that he was

anxious to finish his life as speedily as possible, because "you eat and eat bread so that you get melancholy: so long do you eat." This old man's name was Lukyánitch.

One day, for some reason or other, I tarried long in the fields; a very fair amount of game had presented itself, and the day had turned out fine for hunting—from early morning it had been still and grey, as though thoroughly permeated with evening. I wandered far a-field, and it was not only already completely dark, but the moon had risen and night had long been standing in the sky, as the expression runs, when I reached the familiar farm. I had to pass along the garden. . . All around lay such tranquillity. . .

I crossed the broad road, cautiously made my way through the dusty nettles, and leaned against the low, wattled hedge.[1] Motionless before me lay the small garden all illuminated and, as it were, soothed to stillness by the silvery rays of the moon,—all fragrant and humid; laid out in ancient fashion, it consisted of a single oblong grass-plot. Straight paths came together exactly in the centre, in a circular flower-bed, thickly overgrown with asters; tall lindens surrounded it in an even border. In one spot only was this border, a couple of fathoms in length, broken, and through the gap a part of the low-

[1] In central and southern Russia where timber is scarce, fences, and even the walls of barns and store-houses, are made of interlaced boughs.—TRANSLATOR.

roofed house was visible, with two windows lighted, to my amazement. Young apple-trees reared themselves here and there over the meadow; athwart their slender branches the nocturnal sky gleamed softly blue, and the dreamy light of the moon streamed down; in front of each apple-tree, on the whitening grass, lay its faint, mottled shadow. On one side of the garden the lindens were confusedly green, inundated with motionless, palely-brilliant light; on the other, they stood all black and opaque; a strange, repressed rustling arose at times in their dense foliage; they seemed to be calling to the paths which vanished under them, as though luring them beneath their dim canopy. The whole sky was studded with stars; mysteriously did their soft blue scintillations stream down from on high; they seemed to be gazing with quiet intentness at the distant earth. Small, thin clouds now and then sailed across the moon, momentarily converting its tranquil gleam into an obscure but luminous mist. . . . Everything was dreaming. The air, all warm, all perfumed, did not even vibrate; it only shivered now and then, as water shivers when disturbed by a falling branch. . . . One was conscious of a certain thirst, a certain swooning in it. . . I bent over the fence: a wild scarlet poppy reared its erect little stalk before me from the matted grass; a large, round drop of night dew glittered with a dark gleam in the

heart of the open blossom. Everything was dreaming; everything was taking its ease luxuriously round about; everything seemed to be gazing upward, stretching itself out, motionless, expectant. . . What was it that that warm, not yet sleeping night, was waiting for?

It was waiting for a sound; that sensitive stillness was waiting for a living voice—but everything maintained silence. The nightingales had long since ceased their song . . . and the sudden booming of a beetle as it flew past, the light smacking of a tiny fish in the fish-pond behind the lindens at the end of the garden, the sleepy whistle of a startled bird, a distant cry in the fields,—so far away that the ear could not distinguish whether it was a man, or a wild animal, or a bird which had uttered it,—a short, brisk trampling of hoofs on the road: all these faint sounds, these rustlings, only rendered the stillness more profound. . . My heart yearned within me, with an indefinite feeling, akin not precisely to expectation, nor yet to a memory of happiness. I dared not stir; I was standing motionless before this motionless garden steeped in moonlight and in dew, and, without myself knowing why, was staring importunately at those two windows, which shone dimly red in the soft half-darkness, when suddenly a chord rang out of the house,—rang out and rolled forth in a flood. . . . The irritatingly-resonant air thun-

dered back an echo. . . . I gave an involuntary start.

The chord was followed by the sound of a woman's voice. . . I began to listen eagerly—and . . . can I express my amazement? . . . two years previously, in Italy, at Sorrento, I had heard that selfsame song, that selfsame voice. . . . Yes, yes. . .

"Vieni pensando a me segretamente . . ."

It was they; I had recognised them; those were the sounds. . . This is the way it had happened. I was returning home from a long stroll on the seashore. I was walking swiftly along the street; night had long since descended,—a magnificent night, southern, not calm and sadly-pensive as with us, no! but all radiant, sumptuous, and very beautiful, like a happy woman in her bloom; the moon shone with incredible brilliancy; great, radiant stars fairly throbbed in the dark-blue sky; the black shadows were sharply defined against the ground illuminated to yellowness. On both sides of the street stretched the stone walls of gardens; orange-trees reared above them their crooked branches; the golden globes of heavy fruit, hidden amidst the interlacing leaves, were now barely visible, now glowed brightly, as they ostentatiously displayed themselves in the moonlight. On many trees the blossoms shone tenderly white; the air was all impregnated with fragrance

languishingly powerful, penetrating, and almost heavy, although inexpressibly sweet.

I walked on, and, I must confess,—having already become accustomed to all these wonders,—I was thinking only of how I might most speedily reach my inn, when suddenly, from a small pavilion, built upon the very wall of a garden along which I was passing, a woman's voice rang out. It was singing some song with which I was unfamiliar, and in its sounds there was something so winning, it seemed so permeated with the passion and joyous expectation expressed by the words of the song, that I instantly and involuntarily halted, and raised my head. There were two windows in the pavilion; but in both the Venetian blinds were lowered, and through their narrow chinks a dull light barely made its way.

After having repeated "*vieni, vieni!*" twice, the voice became silent; the faint sound of strings was audible, as though of a guitar which had fallen on the rug; a gown rustled, the floor creaked softly. The streaks of light in one window disappeared. . . Some one had approached from within and leaned against it. I advanced a couple of paces. Suddenly the blind clattered and flew open; a graceful woman, all in white, swiftly thrust her lovely head from the window, and stretching out her arms toward me, said: "*Sei tu?*"

I was disconcerted, I did not know what to say;

but at that same moment the Unknown threw herself backward with a faint shriek, the blind slammed to, and the light in the pavilion grew still more dim, as though it had been carried out into another room. I remained motionless, and for a long time could not recover myself. The face of the woman who had so suddenly presented itself before me was strikingly beautiful. It had flashed too rapidly before my eyes to permit of my immediately recalling each individual feature; but the general impression was indescribably powerful and profound. . . . I felt then and there that I should never forget that countenance. The moon fell straight on the wall of the pavilion, on the window whence she had shown herself to me, and, great heavens! how magnificently had her great, dark eyes shone in its radiance! In what a heavy flood had her half-loosened black hair fallen upon her uplifted, rounded shoulders! How much bashful tenderness there had been in the soft inclination of her form, how much affection in her voice, when she had called to me—in that hurried, but resonant whisper!

After standing for quite a long time on one spot, I at last stepped a little aside, into the shadow of the opposite wall, and began to stare thence at the pavilion with a sort of stupid surprise and anticipation. I listened . . . . listened with strained attention. . . It seemed to me now

that I heard some one's quiet breathing behind the darkened window, now a rustle and quiet laughter. At last, steps resounded in the distance . . . they came nearer; a man of almost identical stature with myself made his appearance at the end of the street, briskly strode up to a gate directly beneath the pavilion, which I had not previously noticed, knocked twice with its iron ring, without looking about him, waited a little, knocked again, and began to sing in an undertone: "*Ecco ridente.*" . . . The gate opened . . . he slipped noiselessly through it. I started, shook my head, threw my hands apart, and pulling my hat morosely down on my brows, went off home in displeasure. On the following day I vainly paced up and down that street for two hours in the very hottest part of the day, past the pavilion, and that same evening went away from Sorrento without even having visited Tasso's house.

The reader can now picture to himself the amazement which suddenly took possession of me, when I heard that same voice, that same song, in the steppes, in one of the most remote parts of Russia. . . . Now, as then, it was night; now, as then, the voice suddenly rang out from a lighted, unfamiliar room; now, as then, I was alone. My heart began to beat violently within me. "Is not this a dream?" I thought. And lo! again the final "*vieni!*" rang out. . . . Can it

be that the window will open? Can it be that the woman will show herself in it?—The window opened. In the window, a woman showed herself. I instantly recognised her, although a distance of fifty paces lay between us, although a light cloud obscured the moon. It was she, my Unknown of Sorrento.

But she did not stretch forth her bare arms as before: she folded them quietly, and leaning them on the window-sill, began to gaze silently and immovably at some point in the garden. Yes, it was she; those were her never-to-be-forgotten features, her eyes, the like of which I had never beheld. Now, also, an ample white gown enfolded her limbs. She seemed somewhat plumper than in Sorrento. Everything about exhaled an atmosphere of the confidence and repose of love, the triumph of beauty, of calm happiness. For a long time she did not stir, then she cast a glance backward into the room and, suddenly straightening herself up, exclaimed thrice, in a loud and ringing voice: "*Addio!*" The beautiful sounds were wafted far, far away, and for a long time they quivered, growing fainter and dying out beneath the lindens of the garden and in the fields behind me, and everywhere. Everything around me was filled for several minutes with the voice of this woman, everything rang in response to her,—rang with her. She shut the window, and a few moments later the light in the house vanished.

As soon as I recovered myself—and this was not very soon, I must admit—I immediately directed my course along the garden of the manor, approached the closed gate, and peered through the wattled fence. Nothing out of the ordinary was visible in the courtyard; in one corner, under a shed, stood a calash. Its front half, all bespattered with dried mud, shone out sharply white in the moonlight. The shutters of the house were closed, as before.

I have forgotten to say, that for about a week previous to that day, I had not visited Glínnoe. For more than half an hour I paced to and fro in perplexity in front of the fence, so that, at last, I attracted the attention of the old watch-dog, which, nevertheless, did not begin to bark at me, but merely looked at me from under the gate in a remarkably ironical manner, with his purblind little eyes puckered up. I understood his hint, and beat a retreat. But before I had managed to traverse half a verst, I suddenly heard the sound of a horse's hoofs behind me. . . . In a few minutes a rider, mounted on a black horse, dashed past me at a swift trot, and swiftly turning toward me his face, where I could descry nothing save an aquiline nose and a very handsome moustache under his military cap, which was pulled well down on his brow, turned into the right-hand road, and immediately vanished behind the forest.

"So that is he," I thought to myself, and my

heart stirred within me in a strange sort of way. It seemed to me that I recognised him; his figure really did suggest the figure of the man whom I had seen enter the garden-gate in Sorrento. Half an hour later I was in Glínnoe at my host's, had roused him, and had immediately begun to interrogate him as to the persons who had arrived at the neighbouring farm. He replied with an effort that the ladies had arrived.

"But what ladies?"

"Why, everybody knows what ladies," he replied very languidly.

"Russians?"

"What else should they be?—Russians, of course."

"Not foreigners?"

"Hey?"

"Have they been here long?"

"Not long, of course."

"And have they come to stay long?"

"That I don't know."

"Are they wealthy?"

"And that, too, we don't know. Perhaps they are wealthy."

"Did not a gentleman come with them?"

"A gentleman?"

"Yes, a gentleman."

The Elder sighed.

"O, okh, O Lord!"—he ejaculated with a yawn. . . . "N-n-o, there was no . . . . gentle-

man, I think there was no gentleman. I don't know!"—he suddenly added.

"And what sort of other neighbours are living here?"

"What sort? everybody knows what sort,—all sorts."

"All sorts?—And what are their names?"

"Whose—the lady proprietors'? or the neighbours'?"

"The lady proprietors'."

Again the Elder yawned.

"What are their names?"—he muttered.—"Why, God knows what their names are! The elder, I think, is named Anna Feódorovna, and the other . . . No, I don't know that one's name."

"Well, what 's their surname, at least?"

"Their surname?"

"Yes, their surname, their family name."

"Their family name. . . . Yes. Why, as God is my witness, I don't know."

"Are they young?"

"Well, no. They are not."

"How old are they, then?"

"Why, the youngest must be over forty."

"Thou art inventing the whole of this."

The Elder was silent for a while.

"Well, you must know best. But I don't know."

"Well, thou art wound up to say one thing!"—I exclaimed with vexation.

Knowing, by experience, that there is no possibility of extracting anything lucid from a Russian man when once he undertakes to answer in that way (and, moreover, my host had only just thrown himself down to sleep, and swayed forward slightly before every answer, opening his eyes widely with child-like surprise, and with difficulty ungluing his lips, smeared with the honey of the first, sweet slumber),—I gave up in despair, and declining supper, went into the barn.

I could not get to sleep for a long time. "Who is she?"—I kept incessantly asking myself:—"a Russian? If a Russian, why does she speak in Italian? . . . . The Elder declares that she is not young. . . . But he 's lying. . . . And who is that happy man? . . Positively, I can comprehend nothing. . . But what a strange adventure! Is it possible that thus, twice in succession . . . . . But I will infallibly find out who she is, and why she has come hither." . . . Agitated by such disordered, fragmentary thoughts as these, I fell asleep late, and saw strange visions. . . . Now it seems to me that I am wandering in some desert, in the very blaze of noonday—and suddenly, I behold in front of me, a huge spot of shadow running over the red-hot yellow sand. . . I raise my head—'t is she, my beauty, whisking through the air, all white, with long white wings, and beckoning me to her. I dart after her; but she floats on lightly

and swiftly, and I cannot rise from the ground, and stretch out eager hands in vain. . . . "*Addio!*" she says to me, as she flies away.—"Why hast thou not wings? . . *Addio!*" . . . . And lo, from all sides, "*Addio!*" resounds. Every grain of sand shouts and squeaks at me: "*Addio!*" . . . then rings out in an intolerable, piercing trill. . . I brush it aside, as I would a gnat, I seek her with my eyes . . . and already she has become a cloud, and is floating upward softly toward the sun; the sun quivers, rocks, laughs, stretches out to meet her long golden threads, and now those threads have enmeshed her, and she melts into them, but I shout at the top of my lungs, like a madman: "That is not the sun, that is not the sun, that is an Italian spider. Who gave it a passport for Russia? I 'll show him up for what he is: I saw him stealing oranges from other people's gardens." . . . Then it seems to me that I am walking along a narrow mountain path. . . I hurry onward: I must get somewhere or other as quickly as possible, some unheard-of happiness is awaiting me. Suddenly a vast cliff rears itself up in front of me. I seek a passage; I go to the right, I go to the left—there is no passage! And now behind the cliff a voice suddenly rings out: "*Passa, passa quei colli.*" . . . It is calling me, that voice; it repeats its mournful summons. I fling myself about in anguish, I seek even the smallest cleft.

. . . Alas! the cliff is perpendicular, there is granite everywhere. . . . "*Passa quei colli,*" wails the voice again. My heart aches, and I hurl my breast against the smooth stone; I scratch it with my nails, in my frenzy. . . . A dark passage suddenly opens before me. . . Swooning with joy, I dash forward. . . "Nonsense!" some one cries to me:—"thou shalt not pass through." . . I look: Lukyánitch is standing in front of me and threatening, and brandishing his arms. . . I hastily fumble in my pockets: I want to bribe him; but there is nothing in my pockets. . . .

"Lukyánitch,"—I say to him,—"let me pass; I will reward thee afterward."

"You are mistaken, signor," Lukyánitch replies to me, and his face assumes a strange expression:—"I am not a house-serf; recognise in me Don Quixote de La Mancha, the famous wandering knight; all my life long I have been seeking my Dulcinea—and I have not been able to find her, and I will not tolerate it, that you shall find yours."

"*Passa quei colli*" . . . . rings out again the almost sobbing voice.

"Stand aside, signor!"—I shout wrathfully, and am on the point of precipitating myself forward . . . but the knight's long spear wounds me in the very heart. . . I fall dead, . . I lie on my back. . . I cannot move . . . and lo, I see that she is coming with a lamp in her hand,

and elevating it with a fine gesture above her head, she peers about her in the gloom, and creeping cautiously up, bends over me. . .

"So this is he, that jester!" she says with a disdainful laugh.—"This is he who wanted to know who I am!" and the hot oil from her lamp drips straight upon my wounded heart. . .

"Psyche!"—I exclaim with an effort, and awake.

All night long I slept badly and was afoot before daybreak. Hastily dressing and arming myself, I wended my way straight to the manor. My impatience was so great that the dawn had only just begun to flush the sky when I reached the familiar gate. Round me the larks were singing, the daws were cawing on the birches; but in the house everything was still buried in death-like matutinal slumber. Even the dog was snoring behind the fence. With the anguish of expectation, exasperated almost to the point of wrath, I paced to and fro on the dewy grass, and kept casting incessant glances at the low-roofed and ill-favoured little house which contained within its walls that mysterious being. . . .

Suddenly the wicket-gate creaked faintly, opened, and Lukyánitch made his appearance on the threshold, in some sort of striped kazák coat. His bristling, long-drawn face seemed to me more surly than ever. Gazing at me not with-

out surprise, he was on the point of shutting the wicket again.

"My good fellow, my good fellow!"—I cried hastily.

"What do you want at such an early hour?"—he returned slowly and dully.

"Tell me, please, they say that your mistress has arrived?"

Lukyánitch made no reply for a while.

"She has arrived. . ."

"Alone?"

"With her sister."

"Were there not guests with you last night?"

"No."

And he drew the wicket toward him.

"Stay, stay, my dear fellow. . . . Do me a favour. . . ."

Lukyánitch coughed and shivered with cold.

"But what is it you want?"

"Tell me, please, how old is your mistress?"

Lukyánitch darted a suspicious glance at me.

"How old is the mistress? I don't know. She must be over forty."

"Over forty! And how old is her sister?"

"Why, she 's in the neighbourhood of forty."

"You don't say so! And is she good-looking?"

"Who, the sister?"

"Yes, the sister."

Lukyánitch grinned.

"I don't know; that 's as a person fancies. In my opinion, she is n't comely."

"How so?"

"Because—she 's very ill-favoured. A bit puny."

"You don't say so! And has no one except them come hither?"

"No one. Who should come?"

"But that cannot be! . . . I . . . ."

"Eh, master! there 's no end of talking with you, apparently,"—retorted the old man with vexation.—"Whew, how cold it is! Good-bye."

"Stay, stay . . . . here 's something for thee. . . ." And I held out to him a quarter of a ruble which I had prepared beforehand; but my hand came into contact with the swiftly banged wicket-gate. The silver coin fell to the ground, rolled away, and lay at my feet.

"Ah, thou old rascal!"—I thought—"Don Quixote de La Mancha! Evidently, thou hast received orders to hold thy tongue. . . . But wait, thou shalt not trick me." . . .

I promised myself that I would elucidate the matter, at any cost. For about half an hour I paced to and fro, without knowing what decision to adopt. At last I made up my mind first to inquire in the village, precisely who had arrived at the manor, and who she was, then to return, and, as the saying runs, not desist until the matter was cleared up.—And if the Unknown should

come out of the house, I would, at last, see her by daylight, near at hand, like a living woman, not like a vision.

It was about a verst to the village, and I immediately betook myself thither, stepping out lightly and alertly: a strange audacity was seething and sparkling in my blood; the invigorating freshness of the morning excited me after the uneasy night.—In the village I learned from two peasants, who were on their way to their work, everything which I could learn from them; namely: I learned that the manor, together with the village which I had entered, was called Mikhaílovskoe, that it belonged to the widow of a Major, Anna Feódorovna Shlýkoff; that she had with her her sister, an unmarried woman, Pelagéya Feódorovna Badáeff by name; that both of them were advanced in years, were wealthy, hardly ever lived at home, were always travelling about, kept no one in attendance on them except two female domestic serfs and a male cook; that Anna Feódorovna had recently returned from Moscow with no one but her sister. . . . This last circumstance greatly perturbed me: it was impossible to assume that the peasants also had been commanded to hold their peace about my Unknown. But it was utterly impossible to concede that Anna Feódorovna Shlýkoff, a widow of five-and-forty, and that young, charming woman, whom I had seen on the previous evening, were one and

the same person. Pelagéya Feódorovna, judging from the description, was not distinguished for her beauty either, and, in addition to that, at the mere thought that the woman whom I had seen at Sorrento could bear the name of Pelagéya, and still more of Badáeff, I shrugged my shoulders and laughed maliciously. And nevertheless, I had beheld her the night before in that house. . . . I had beheld her, beheld her with my own eyes, I reflected. Irritated, enraged, but still more inclined to stand by my intention, I would have liked to return at once to the manor . . . . but glanced at my watch; it was not yet six o'clock. I decided to wait a while. Every one was still asleep at the farm, in all probability . . . and to prowl about the house at such an hour would only serve to arouse unnecessary suspicion; and besides, in front of me stretched bushes, and beyond them an aspen wood was visible. . .

I must do myself the justice to say, that, notwithstanding the thoughts which were exciting me, the noble passion for the hunt had not yet grown wholly mute within me; "perchance," I thought,—"I shall hit upon a covey,—and that will serve to pass away the time." I entered the bushes. But, truth to tell, I walked in a very careless way, quite out of consonance with the rules of the art: I did not follow my dog constantly with my eyes, I did not snort over a thick bush, in the hope that a red-browed black

snipe would fly thence with a whirr and a crash, but kept incessantly looking at my watch, which never serves any purpose whatsoever. And, at last, it was going on nine.—" 'T is time!" I exclaimed aloud, and was on the point of turning back to the manor, when suddenly a huge black woodcock actually did begin to flutter out of the thick grass a couple of paces from me. I fired at the magnificent bird, and wounded it under the wing; it almost fell to the ground, but recovered itself, started off, fluttering its wings swiftly and, diving toward the wood, tried to soar above the first aspens on the edge, but its strength failed, and it rolled headlong into the thicket. It would have been utterly unpardonable to abandon such a prize. I strode briskly after it, entered the forest, made a sign to Dianka, and a few moments later I heard a feeble clucking and flapping; it was the unlucky woodcock, struggling under the paws of my quick-scented hound. I picked it up, put it in my game-bag, glanced round, and—remained rooted to the spot, as it were. . . .

The forest which I had entered was very dense and wild, so that I had with difficulty made my way to the spot where the bird had fallen; but at a short distance from me wound a cart-road, and along this road were riding on horseback my beauty and the man who had overtaken me on the night before; I recognised him by his

moustache. They were riding softly, in silence, holding each other by the hand; their horses were barely putting one foot before the other, lazily swaying from side to side and handsomely stretching out their long necks. When I had recovered from my first alarm . . . precisely that, alarm: I can give no other appellation to the feeling which suddenly seized upon me. . . . I fairly bored into her with my eyes. How beautiful she was! how enchantingly her graceful form moved toward me amid the emerald green! Soft shadows, tender reflections glided over her —over her long grey habit, over her slender, slightly-bent neck, over her faintly-rosy face, over her glossy black hair, which escaped luxuriantly from under her low-crowned hat. But how shall I transmit that expression of utter, passionate bliss of a person passionate to the point of speechlessness, which breathed forth from her features? Her head seemed to be bending beneath the burden of it; moist, golden sparks glittered in her dark eyes, which were half-concealed by her eyelashes; they gazed nowhere, those happy eyes, and the slender brows drooped over them. An irresolute, child-like smile—the smile of profound happiness, strayed over her lips; it seemed as though excess of happiness had wearied and even broken her a little, as a flower in full bloom sometimes breaks its own stem. Both her hands lay powerless: one, in the hand of the man who

was riding by her side, the other on her horse's mane.

I succeeded in getting a good look at her —and at him also. . . . He was a handsome, stately man, with an un-Russian face. He was gazing at her boldly and merrily, and, so far as I was able to observe, was admiring her not without secret pride. He was admiring her, the villain, and was very well-satisfied with himself, and not sufficiently touched, not sufficiently moved,—precisely that, moved. . . And, as a matter of fact, what man does deserve such devotion, what soul, even the most beautiful, is worthy of furnishing another soul such happiness? I must say, that I was envious of him! . . . . In the meantime, they had both arrived on a level with me . . . my dog suddenly bounded out into the road and began to bark. My Unknown started, cast a swift glance around and, catching sight of me, dealt her steed a violent blow on the neck with her whip. The horse snorted, reared up on his hind legs, threw both his hoofs forward simultaneously, and dashed off at a gallop. . . . The man immediately gave the spur to his black horse, and when I emerged by the road into the border of the forest a few moments later, both of them were already galloping off into the golden distance, across the fields, rising smartly and regularly in their saddles . . . and were not galloping in the direction of the farm. . . .

I gazed. . . . They speedily disappeared behind a hillock, brilliantly illuminated for the last time by the sun against the dark line of the horizon. I stood, and stood, then returned with slow steps to the forest and sat down on the path, covering my eyes with my hand.—I have observed that after meeting strangers, all that is necessary is to close the eyes—and their features immediately start up before you; any one can verify my observation on the street. The more familiar the faces, the more difficult is it for them to present themselves, the more indefinite is their impression; you recall them, but you do not see them, ... and you can never possibly picture to yourself your own face. . . . The very minutest separate feature is known to you, but the entire image will not constitute itself. So then, I sat down, closed my eyes—and immediately beheld the Unknown and her companion, and their horses, and everything. . . . The man's smiling countenance stood before me with particular sharpness and distinctness. I began to stare intently at it . . . it became confused, and dissolved into a sort of crimson mist, and after it, her image also floated away and sank, and would not return.

"Well, never mind!"—I thought;—"at all events, I have seen them, seen them both clearly. . . . It remains for me now to find out their names." Endeavour to find out their names!

What ill-judged, petty curiosity! But I swear that it was not curiosity which had flamed up in me. In truth, it simply seemed to me impossible not to discover, eventually, who they were, after accident had so strangely and so persistently brought us together. Moreover, my former impatient perplexity no longer existed; it had been replaced by a certain confused, sorrowful feeling, of which I was somewhat ashamed. . . . I was jealous. . . .

I did not hasten back to the farm. I must confess that I had become ashamed to pry into the secrets of others. Moreover, the appearance of the fond pair by daylight, in the light of the sun, although it was unexpected and, I repeat, strange, had not exactly soothed, but chilled me. I no longer found anything supernatural, miraculous in this occurrence . . . . nothing resembling an impossible dream. . . .

I began to hunt again with greater assiduity than before; but still, there were no genuine raptures. I hit upon a covey, which engaged my attention for an hour and a half. . . The young partridges did not respond to my whistle for a long time,—probably because I did not whistle with sufficient "objectivity."—The sun had already risen quite high (my watch indicated twelve o'clock), when I directed my steps toward the manor. I walked without haste. Yonder, at last, the low-roofed little house peeped forth from its

hill. I approached . . . . and not without secret satisfaction beheld Lukyánitch. As of yore, he was sitting motionless on the bench in front of the wing. The gate was closed—also the shutters.

"Good morning, uncle!"—I shouted to him from afar.—"Hast thou come out to warm thyself?"

Lukyánitch turned his gaunt face toward me and silently doffed his cap.

I went up to him.

"Good morning, uncle, good morning,"—I repeated, wishing to encourage him.—"Why,"—I added, unexpectedly descrying my quarterruble on the ground,—"didst not thou see it?"

And I pointed out to him the silver circle, half peeping from beneath the short grass.

"Yes, I saw it."

"Then why didst thou not pick it up?"

"Because it was n't my money, so I did n't pick it up."

"What a fellow thou art, brother!"—I returned, not without embarrassment, and picking up the coin, I offered it to him again.—"Take it, take it, for tea."

"Much obliged,"—Lukyánitch answered me, with a composed smile.—"It is n't necessary; I 'll manage to pull through without it. Much obliged."

"But I am ready to give you still more, with pleasure!"—I replied in confusion.

"What for? Please don't disturb yourself—much obliged for your good-will, but we still have a crust of bread. And perhaps we sha'n't eat that up—that 's as it may happen."

And he rose, and put out his hand to the wicket-gate.

"Stay, stay, old man,"—I began, almost in desperation;—"how uncommunicative thou art to-day, really. . . . Tell me, at least, has your mistress risen yet?"

"She has."

"And . . . . is she at home?"

"No, she 's not at home."

"Has she gone off on a visit, pray?"

"No, sir; she has gone to Moscow."

"To Moscow! How is that? Why, she was here this morning!"

"She was."

"And she passed the night here?"

"She did."

"And she came hither recently?"

"Yes."

"What next, my good man?"

"Why, this: it must be about an hour since she deigned to start back to Moscow."

"To Moscow!"

I stared in petrification at Lukyánitch; I had not expected this, I admit.

Lukyánitch stared at me. . . . A crafty, senile smile distended his withered lips and almost beamed in his melancholy eyes.

"And did she go away with her sister?"—I said at last.

"Yes."

"So that now there is no one in the house?"

"No one. . . ."

"This old man is deceiving me,"—flashed through my head.—"'T is not without cause that he is grinning so craftily.—Listen, Lukyánitch,"—I said aloud;—"dost wish to do me one favour?"

"What is it you wish?"—he enunciated slowly, evidently beginning to feel annoyed by my questions.

"Thou sayest that there is no one in the house; canst thou show it to me? I should be very grateful to thee."

"That is, you want to inspect the rooms?"

"Yes, the rooms."

Lukyánitch remained silent for a space.

"Very well,"—he said at last.—"Pray, enter. . . ."

And bending down, he stepped across the threshold of the wicket-gate. I followed him. After traversing a tiny courtyard, we ascended the tottering steps of the porch. The old man gave the door a push; there was no lock on it: a cord with a knot stuck out through the key-hole. . . .

We entered the house. It consisted in all of five or six low-ceiled rooms, and, so far as I could make out in the faint light, which streamed sparsely through the rifts in the shutters, the furniture in these rooms was extremely plain and decrepit. In one of them (namely, in the one which opened on the garden) stood a small, antiquated piano. . . . I raised its warped lid and struck the keys: a shrill, hissing sound rang out and died feebly away, as though complaining of my audacity. It was impossible to discern from anything that people had recently left the house; it had a dead and stifling sort of smell—the odour of an uninhabited dwelling; here and there, indeed, a discarded paper gave one to understand, by its whiteness, that it had been dropped there recently. I picked up one such bit of paper; it proved to be a scrap of a letter; on one side in a dashing feminine handwriting were scrawled the words "*se taire?*" on the other I made out the word "*bonheur.*" . . . On a small round table near the window stood a nosegay of half-faded flowers in a glass, and a green, rumpled ribbon was lying there also . . . . I took that ribbon as a souvenir. —Lukyánitch opened a narrow door, pasted over with wall-paper.

"Here,"—said he, extending his hand:—"this here is the bedroom, and yonder, beyond it, is the room for the maids, and there are no other chambers. . . ."

We returned by way of the corridor.—"And what room is that yonder?"—I asked, pointing at a broad, white door with a lock.

"That?"—Lukyánitch answered me, in a dull voice.—"That 's nothing."

"How so?"

"Because. . . . 'T is a store-room. . ." And he started to go into the anteroom.

"A store-room? Cannot I look at it?" . . .

"What makes you want to do that, master, really?!"—replied Lukyánitch with displeasure. —"What is there for you to look at? Chests, old crockery . . . 't is a store-room, and nothing more. . . ."

"All the same, show it to me, please, old man," —I said, although I was inwardly ashamed of my indecent persistence.—"I should like, you see . . . . I should like to have just such a house myself at home, in my village . . . ."

I was ashamed: I could not complete the sentence I had begun.

Lukyánitch stood with his grey head bent on his breast, and stared at me askance in a strange sort of way.

"Show it,"—I said.

"Well, as you like,"—he replied at last, got the key, and reluctantly opened the door.

I glanced into the store-room. There really was nothing noteworthy about it. On the walls hung old portraits with gloomy, almost black

countenances, and vicious eyes. The floor was strewn with all sorts of rubbish.

"Well, have you seen all you want?"—asked Lukyánitch, gruffly.

"Yes; thanks!"—I hastily replied.

He slammed to the door. I went out into the anteroom, and from the anteroom into the courtyard.

Lukyánitch escorted me, muttering: "Goodbye, sir!" and went off to his own wing.

"But who was the lady visitor at your house last night?"—I called after him:—"I met her this morning in the grove."

I had hoped to daze him with my sudden question, to evoke a thoughtless answer. But the old man merely laughed dully, and slammed the door behind him when he went in.

I retraced my steps to Glínnoe. I felt awkward, like a boy who has been put to shame.

"No,"—I said to myself:—"evidently, I shall not obtain a solution to this puzzle. I 'll give it up! I will think no more of all this."

An hour later, I set out on my homeward drive, enraged and irritated.

A week elapsed. Try as I might to banish from me the memory of the Unknown, of her companion, of my meetings with them,—it kept constantly returning, and besieged me with all the importunate persistence of an after-dinner fly. . . . Lukyánitch, with his mysterious looks

and reserved speeches, with his coldly-mournful smile, also recurred incessantly to my memory. The house itself, when I thought of it,—that house itself gazed at me cunningly and stupidly through its half-closed shutters, and seemed to be jeering at me, as though it were saying to me: "And all the same thou shalt not find out anything!" At last I could endure it no longer, and one fine day I drove to Glínnoe, and from Glínnoe set out on foot . . . . whither? The reader can easily divine.

I must confess that, as I approached the mysterious manor, I felt a decidedly violent agitation. The exterior of the house had not undergone the slightest change: the same closed windows, the same melancholy and desolate aspect; only, on the bench, in front of the wing, instead of old Lukyánitch, sat some young house-serf or other, of twenty, in a long nankeen kaftan and a red shirt. He was sitting with his curly head resting on his palm, and dozing, swaying to and fro from time to time, and quivering.

"Good morning, brother!"—I said in a loud voice.

He immediately sprang to his feet and stared at me with widely-opened, panic-stricken eyes.

"Good morning, brother!"—I repeated:—"And where is the old man?"

"What old man?"—said the young fellow, slowly.

"Lukyánitch."

"Ah, Lukyánitch!"—He darted a glance aside.—"Do you want Lukyánitch?"

"Yes, I do. Is he at home?"

"N-no,"—enunciated the young fellow, brokenly,—"he, you know . . . how shall I . . . tell . . . you . . . about . . . . that . . . ."

"Is he ill?"

"No."

"What then?"

"Why, he is n't here at all."

"Why not?"

"Because. Something . . . . unpleasant . . . happened to him."

"Is he dead?"—I inquired with surprise.

"He strangled himself."

"Strangled himself!"—I exclaimed in affright, and clasped my hands.

We both gazed in each other's eyes in silence.

"How long ago?"—I said at last.

"Why, to-day is the fifth day since. They buried him yesterday."

"But why did he strangle himself?"

"The Lord knows. He was a freeman, on wages; he did not know want, the masters petted him as though he were a relation. For we have such good masters—may God give them health! I simply can't understand what came over him. Evidently, the Evil One entrapped him."

"But how did he do it?"

"Why, so. He took and strangled himself."

"And nothing of the sort had been previously noticed in him?"

"How shall I tell you. . . . There was nothing . . . . particular. He was always a very melancholy man. He used to groan, and groan. 'I 'm so bored,' he would say. Well, and then there was his age. Of late, he really did begin to meditate something. He used to come to us in the village; for I 'm his nephew.—'Well, Vásya, my lad,' he would say, 'prithee, brother, come and spend the night with me!'—'What for, uncle?'—'Why, because I 'm frightened, somehow; 't is tiresome alone.' Well, and so I 'd go to him. He would come out into the courtyard and stare and stare so at the house, and shake and shake his head, and how he would sigh! . . . Just before that night, that is to say, the one on which he put an end to his life, he came to us again, and invited me. Well, and so I went. When we reached his wing, he sat for a while on the bench; then he rose, and went out. I wait, and 'he 's rather long in coming back'—says I, and went out into the courtyard, and shouted, 'Uncle! hey, uncle!' My uncle did not call back. Thinks I: 'Whither can he have gone? surely, not into the house?' and I went into the house. Twilight was already drawing on. And as I was passing the store-room, I heard something scratching there, behind the door; so I took and

opened the door. Behold, there he sat doubled up under the window.

"'What art thou doing there, uncle?' says I. But he turns round, and how he shouts at me, and his eyes are so keen, so keen, they fairly blaze, like a cat's.

"'What dost thou want? Dost not see—I am shaving myself.' And his voice was so hoarse. My hair suddenly rose upright, and I don't know why I got frightened . . . evidently, about that time the devils had already assailed him.

"'What, in the dark?'—says I, and my knees fairly shook.

"'Come,' says he, 'it 's all right, begone!'

"I went, and he came out of the store-room and locked the door. So we went back to the wing, and the terror immediately left me.

"'What wast thou doing in the store-room, uncle?' says I.—He was fairly frightened.

"'Hold thy tongue!' says he; 'hold thy tongue!' and he crawled up on the oven-bench.

"'Well,' thinks I to myself,—'t will be better for me not to speak to him; he surely must be feeling ill to-day.' So I went and lay down on the oven-bench myself, too. And a night-light was burning in a corner. So, I am lying there, and just dozing, you know . . . when suddenly I hear the door creaking softly . . . and it opens —so, a little. And my uncle was lying with his back to the door, and, as you may remember,

he was always a little hard of hearing. But this time he sprang up suddenly. . .

" ' Who 's calling me, hey? who is it? hast come for me, for me? ! ' and out he ran into the yard without his hat. . . .

" I thought: ' What 's the matter with him? ' and, sinful man that I am, I fell asleep immediately. The next morning I woke up . . . . and Lukyánitch was not there.

" I went out of doors and began to call him—he was nowhere. I asked the watchman:

" ' Has n't my uncle come out? ' says I.

" ' No,' says he, ' I have n't seen him.' . . .

" ' Has n't something happened to him, brother? ' . . . . says I. . .

" ' Oï! ' . . . . We were both fairly frightened.

" ' Come, Feodósyeitch,' says I, ' come on,' says I,—' let 's see whether he is n't in the house.'

" ' Come on,'—says he, ' Vasíly Timofyéitch! ' but he himself was as white as clay.

" We entered the house. . . I was about to pass the store-room, but I glanced and the padlock was hanging open on the hasp, and I pushed the door, but the door was fastened inside. . . . Feodósyeitch immediately ran round, and peeped in at the window.

" ' Vasíly Timofyéitch! ' he cries;—' his legs are hanging, his legs . . . '

" I ran to the window. And they were his legs, Lukyánitch's legs. And he had hanged himself

in the middle of the room.—Well, we sent for the judge. . . . They took him down from the rope; the rope was tied with twelve knots."

"Well, what did the court say?"

"What did the court say? Nothing. They pondered and pondered what the cause might be. There was no cause. And so they decided that he must have been out of his mind. His head had been aching of late, he had been complaining very frequently of his head. . . ."

I chatted for about half an hour longer with the young fellow, and went away, at last, completely disconcerted. I must confess that I could not look at that rickety house without a secret, superstitious terror. . . . A month later I quitted my country-seat, and little by little all these horrors, these mysterious encounters, vanished from my mind.

II

Three years passed. The greater part of that time I spent in Petersburg and abroad; and even when I did run down to my place in the country, it was only for a few days at a time, so that I never chanced to be in Glínnoe or in Mikhaílovskoe on a single occasion. Nowhere had I seen my beauty nor the man. One day, toward the end of the third year, in Moscow, I chanced to meet Madame Shlýkoff and her sister, Pelagéya

Badáeff—that same Pelagéya whom I, sinful man that I am, had hitherto regarded as a mythical being—at an evening gathering in the house of one of my acquaintances. Neither of the ladies was any longer young, and both possessed pleasing exteriors; their conversation was characterised by wit and mirth: they had travelled a great deal, and travelled with profit; easy gaiety was observable in their manners. But they and my acquaintance had positively nothing in common. I was presented to them. Madame Shlýkoff and I dropped into conversation (her sister was being entertained by a passing geologist). I informed her that I had the pleasure of being her neighbour in *** county.

"Ah! I really do possess a small estate there," —she remarked,—"near Glínnoe."

"Exactly, exactly,"—I returned:—"I know your Mikhaílovskoe. Do you ever go thither?"

"I?—Rarely."

"Were you there three years ago?"

"Stay! I think I was. Yes, I was, that is true."

"With your sister, or alone?"

She darted a glance at me.

"With my sister. We spent about a week there. On business, you know. However, we saw no one."

"H'm. . . . I think there are very few neighbours there."

"Yes, very few. I 'm not fond of neighbours."

"Tell me,"—I began;—"I believe you had a catastrophe there that same year. Lukyánitch . . . ."

Madame Shlýkoff's eyes immediately filled with tears.

"And did you know him?"—she said with vivacity.—"Such a misfortune! He was a very fine, good old man . . . and just fancy, without any cause, you know . . . ."

Madame Shlýkoff's sister approached us. She was, in all probability, beginning to be bored by the learned disquisitions of the geologist about the formation of the banks of the Volga.

"Just fancy, Pauline,"—began my companion;—"monsieur knew Lukyánitch."

"Really? Poor old man!"

"I hunted more than once in the environs of Mikhaílovskoe at that period, when you were there three years ago,"—I remarked.

"I?"—returned Pelagéya, in some astonishment.

"Well, yes, of course!"—hastily interposed her sister; "is it possible that thou dost not recall it?"

And she looked her intently in the eye.

"Akh, yes, yes . . . that is true!"—replied Pelagéya, suddenly.

"Ehe—he!" I thought: "I don't believe you were in Mikhaílovskoe, my dear."

"Will not you sing us something, Pelagéya

Feódorovna?"—suddenly began a tall young man, with a crest of fair hair and turbidly-sweet little eyes.

"Really, I don't know,"—said Miss Badáeff.

"And do you sing?"—I exclaimed with vivacity, springing up briskly from my seat. "For heaven's sake . . . . akh, for heaven's sake, do sing us something."

"But what shall I sing to you?"

"Don't you know,"—I began, using my utmost endeavours to impart to my face an indifferent and easy expression,—"an Italian song . . . it begins this way: '*Passa quei colli*'?"

"Yes," replied Pelagéya with perfect innocence. "Do you want me to sing that? Very well."

And she seated herself at the piano. I, like Hamlet, riveted my eyes on Madame Shlýkoff. It seemed to me that at the first note she gave a slight start; but she sat quietly to the end. Miss Badáeff sang quite well. The song ended, the customary plaudits resounded. They began to urge her to sing something else; but the two sisters exchanged glances, and a few minutes later they took their departure. As they left the room I overheard the word "*importun.*"

"I deserved it!" I thought—and did not meet them again.

Still another year elapsed. I transferred my residence to Petersburg. Winter arrived; the

masquerades began. One day, as I emerged at eleven o'clock at night from the house of a friend, I felt myself in such a gloomy frame of mind that I decided to betake myself to the masquerade in the Assembly of the Nobility.[1] For a long time I roamed about among the columns and past the mirrors with a discreetly-fatalistic expression on my countenance—with that expression which, so far as I have observed, makes its appearance in such cases on the faces of the most well-bred persons—why, the Lord only knows. For a long time I roamed about, now and then parrying with a jest the advances of divers shrill dominoes with suspicious lace and soiled gloves, and still more rarely addressing them. For a long time I surrendered my ears to the blare of the trumpets and the whining of the violins; at last, being pretty well bored, I was on the point of going home . . . . and . . . . and remained. I caught sight of a woman in a black domino, leaning against a column,—and no sooner had I caught sight of her than I stopped short, stepped up to her, and . . . will the reader believe me? . . . . immediately recognised in her my Unknown. How I recognised her: whether by the glance which she abstractedly cast upon me through the oblong aperture in her mask, or by the wonderful outlines of her shoulders and arms, or by the peculiarly feminine stateliness of her whole form, or, in conclu-

[1] The Nobles' Club.—Translator.

sion, by some secret voice which suddenly spoke in me,—I cannot say . . . . only, recognise her I did. With a quiver in my heart, I walked past her several times. She did not stir; in her attitude there was something so hopelessly sorrowful that, as I gazed at her, I involuntarily recalled two lines of a Spanish romance:

Soy un cuadro de tristeza,
Arrimado a la pared.[1]

I stepped behind the column against which she was leaning, and bending my head down to her very ear, enunciated softly:

"*Passa quei colli.*" . . .

She began to tremble all over, and turned swiftly round to me. Our eyes met at very short range, and I was able to observe how fright had dilated her pupils. Feebly extending one hand in perplexity, she gazed at me.

"On May 6, 184*, in Sorrento, at ten o'clock in the evening, in della Croce Street,"—I said in a deliberate voice, without taking my eyes from her; "afterward, in Russia, in the *** Government, in the hamlet of Mikhaílovskoe, on June 22, 184*." . . . .

I said all this in French. She recoiled a little, scanned me from head to foot with a look of

[1] "I am a picture of sorrow,
Leaning against the wall."

amazement, and whispering, "*Venez,*" swiftly left the room. I followed her.

We walked on in silence. It is beyond my power to express what I felt as I walked side by side with her. It was as though a very beautiful dream had suddenly become reality . . . as though the statue of Galatea had descended as a living woman from its pedestal in the sight of the swooning Pygmalion. . . . I could not believe it, I could hardly breathe.

We traversed several rooms. . . . At last, in one of them, she paused in front of a small divan near the window, and seated herself. I sat down beside her.

She slowly turned her head toward me, and looked intently at me.

"Do you . . . . do you come from *him?*" she said.

Her voice was weak and unsteady. . .

Her question somewhat disconcerted me.

"No . . . . not from him,"—I replied haltingly.

"Do you know him?"

"Yes,"—I replied, with mysterious solemnity. I wanted to keep up my rôle.—"Yes, I know him."

She looked distrustfully at me, started to say something, and dropped her eyes.

"You were waiting for him in Sorrento,"—I went on;—"you met him at Mikhaílovskoe, you rode on horseback with him. . . ."

"How could you . . . ." she began.

"I know . . . I know all. . . ."

"Your face seems familiar to me, somehow,"—she continued:—"but no . . . ."

"No, I am a stranger to you."

"Then what is it that you want?"

"I know that also,"—I persisted.

I understood very well that I must take advantage of the excellent beginning to go further, that my repetitions of "I know all, I know," were becoming ridiculous—but my agitation was so great, that unexpected meeting had thrown me into such confusion, I had lost my self-control to such a degree that I positively was unable to say anything else. Moreover, I really knew nothing more. I felt conscious that I was talking nonsense, felt conscious that, from the mysterious, omniscient being which I must at first appear to her to be, I should soon be converted into a sort of grinning fool . . . . but there was no help for it.

"Yes, I know all,"—I muttered once more.

She darted a glance at me, rose quickly to her feet, and was on the point of departing.

But this was too cruel. I seized her hand.

"For God's sake,"—I began,—"sit down, listen to me. . . ."

She reflected, and seated herself.

"I just told you,"—I went on fervently,—"that I knew everything—that is nonsense. I know nothing; I do not know either who you

are, or who he is, and if I have been able to surprise you by what I said to you a while ago by the column, you must ascribe that to chance alone, to a strange, incomprehensible chance, which, as though in derision, has brought me in contact with you twice, and almost in identically the same way on both occasions, and has made me the involuntary witness of that which, perhaps, you would like to keep secret. . . ."

And thereupon, without the slightest circumlocution, I related to her everything: my meetings with her in Sorrento, in Russia, my futile inquiries in Mikhaílovskoe, even my conversation in Moscow with Madame Shlýkoff and her sister.

"Now you know everything,"—I went on, when I had finished my story.—"I will not undertake to describe to you what an overwhelming impression you made on me: to see you and not to be bewitched by you is impossible. On the other hand, there is no need for me to tell you what the nature of that impression was. Remember under what conditions I beheld you both times. . . . Believe me, I am not fond of indulging in senseless hopes, but you must understand also that inexpressible agitation which has seized upon me to-day, and you must pardon the awkward artifice to which I decided to have recourse in order to attract your attention, if only for a moment . . . ."

She listened to my confused explanations without raising her head.

"What do you want of me?"—she said at last.

"I? . . . I want nothing . . . I am happy as I am. . . . I have too much respect for such secrets."

"Really? But, up to this point, apparently . . . . However,"—she went on,—"I will not reproach you. Any man would have done the same in your place. Moreover, chance really has brought us together so persistently . . . that would seem to give you a certain right to frankness on my part. Listen: I am not one of those uncomprehended and unhappy women who go to masquerades for the sake of chattering to the first man they meet about their sufferings, who require hearts filled with sympathy. . . . I require sympathy from no one; my own heart is dead, and I have come hither in order to bury it definitively."

She raised a handkerchief to her lips.

"I hope"—she went on with a certain amount of effort—"that you do not take my words for the ordinary effusions of a masquerade. You must understand that I am in no mood for that. . . ."

And, in truth, there was something terrible in her voice, despite all the softness of its tones.

"I am a Russian,"—she said in Russian;—up to that point she had expressed herself in the

French language:—" although I have lived little in Russia. . . . It is not necessary for me to know your name. Anna Feódorovna is an old friend of mine; I really did go to Mikhaílovskoe under the name of her sister. . . It was impossible at that time for me to meet him openly. . . And even without that, rumours had begun to circulate . . . at that time, obstacles still existed —he was not free. . . Those obstacles have disappeared . . . but he whose name should become mine, he with whom you saw me, has abandoned me."

She made a gesture with her hand, and paused awhile. . . .

" You really do not know him? You have not met him? "

" Not once."

" He has spent almost all this time abroad. But he is here now. . . . That is my whole history," —she added;—" you see, there is nothing mysterious about it, nothing peculiar."

" And Sorrento? "—I timidly interposed.

" I made his acquaintance in Sorrento,"—she answered slowly, becoming pensive.

Both of us held our peace. A strange discomposure took possession of me. I was sitting beside her, beside that woman whose image had so often flitted through my dreams, had so torturingly agitated and irritated me,—I was sitting beside her and felt a cold and a weight at

my heart. I knew that nothing would come of that meeting, that between her and me there was a gulf, that when we parted we should part forever. With her head bowed forward and both hands lying in her lap, she sat there indifferent and careless. I know that carelessness of incurable grief, I know that indifference of irrecoverable happiness! The masks strolled past us in couples; the sounds of the "monotonous and senseless" waltz now reverberated dully in the distance, now were wafted by in sharp gusts; the merry ball-music agitated me heavily and mournfully. "Can it be,"—I thought,—"that this woman is the same who appeared to me once on a time in the window of that little country house far away, in all the splendour of triumphant beauty? . . . ." And yet, time seemed not to have touched her. The lower part of her face, unconcealed by the lace of her mask, was of almost childish delicacy; but a chill emanated from her, as from a statue. . . . Galatea had returned to her pedestal, and would descend from it no more.

Suddenly she drew herself up, darted a glance into the next room, and rose.

"Give me your arm,"—she said to me. "Let us go away quickly, quickly."

We returned to the ball-room. She walked so fast that I could barely keep up with her. She came to a standstill beside one of the columns.

"Let us wait here,"—she whispered.

"Are you looking for any one?"—I began....

But she paid no heed to me: her eager gaze was fixed upon the crowd. Languidly and menacingly did her great black eyes look forth from beneath the black velvet.

I turned in the direction of her gaze and understood everything. Along the corridor formed by the row of columns and the wall, he was walking, that man whom I had met with her in the forest. I recognised him instantly: he had hardly changed at all. His golden-brown moustache curled as handsomely as ever, his brown eyes beamed with the same calm and self-confident cheerfulness as of yore. He was walking without haste, and, lightly bending his slender figure, was narrating something to a woman in a domino, whose arm was linked in his. As he came on a level with us, he suddenly raised his head, looked first at me, then at the woman with whom I was standing, and probably recognised her eyes, for his eyebrows quivered slightly,—he screwed up his eyes, and a barely perceptible, but intolerably insolent smile hovered over his lips. He bent down to his companion, and whispered a couple of words in her ear; she immediately glanced round, her blue eyes hastily scanned us both, and with a soft laugh she menaced him with her little hand. He slightly shrugged one shoulder, she nestled up to him coquettishly. . . .

I turned to my Unknown. She was gazing

after the receding pair, and suddenly, tearing her arm from mine, she rushed toward the door. I was about to dash after her; but turning round, she gave me such a look that I made her a profound bow, and remained where I was. I understood that to pursue her would be both rude and stupid.

"Tell me, please, my dear fellow,"—I said, half an hour later, to one of my friends—the living directory of Petersburg:—"who is that tall, handsome gentleman with a moustache?"

"That? . . . that is some foreigner or other, a rather enigmatic individual, who very rarely makes his appearance on our horizon. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, because!" . . . .

I returned home. Since that time I have never met my Unknown anywhere. Had I known the name of the man whom she loved, I might, probably, have found out, eventually, who she was, but I myself did not desire that. I have said above that that woman appeared to me like a dream-vision—and like a dream-vision she went past and vanished forever.

MUMÚ

(1852)

MUMÚ

IN one of the remote streets of Moscow, in a grey house with white pillars, an entresol, and a crooked balcony, dwelt in former days a well-born lady, a widow, surrounded by numerous domestics. Her sons were in the service in Petersburg, her daughters were married; she rarely went out into society, and was living out the last years of a miserly and tedious old age in solitude. Her day, cheerless and stormy, was long since over; but her evening also was blacker than night.

Among the ranks of her menials, the most remarkable person was the yard-porter, Gerásim, a man six feet five inches in height, built like an epic hero, and a deaf-mute from his birth. His mistress had taken him from the village, where he lived alone, in a tiny cottage, apart from his brethren, and was considered the most punctual of the taxable serfs. Endowed with remarkable strength, he did the work of four persons. Matters made progress in his hands, and it was a cheerful sight to watch him when he ploughed and, applying his huge hands to the primitive plough, seemed to be carving open the elastic

bosom of the earth alone, without the aid of his little nag; or about St. Peter's Day [1] wielding the scythe so shatteringly that he might even have hewn off a young birch-wood from its roots; or threshing briskly and unremittingly with a chain seven feet in length, while the firm, oblong muscles on his shoulders rose and fell like levers. His uninterrupted muteness imparted to his indefatigable labour a grave solemnity. He was a splendid peasant, and had it not been for his infirmity, any maiden would willingly have married him. . . . But Gerásim was brought to Moscow, boots were bought for him, a broom and a shovel were put into his hand, and he was appointed to be the yard-porter.

At first he felt a violent dislike for his new life. From his childhood he had been accustomed to field-labour, to country life. Set apart by his infirmity from communion with his fellow-men, he had grown up dumb and mighty, as a tree grows on fruitful soil. . . . Transported to the town, he did not understand what was happening to him;—he felt bored and puzzled, as a healthy young bull is puzzled when he has just been taken from the pasture, where the grass grew up to his belly,—when he has been taken, and placed in a railway-wagon,—and, lo, with his robust body enveloped now with smoke and sparks, again with billows of steam, he is drawn headlong onward,

[1] June 29 (O. S.)—July 13 (N. S.).—Translator.

drawn with rumble and squeaking, and whither —God only knows! Gerásim's occupations in his new employment seemed to him a mere farce after his onerous labours as a peasant; in half an hour he had finished everything, and he was again standing in the middle of the courtyard and staring, open-mouthed, at all the passers-by, as though desirous of obtaining from them the solution of his enigmatic situation; or he would suddenly go off to some corner and, flinging his broom or his shovel far from him, would throw himself on the ground face downward, and lie motionless on his breast for whole hours at a time, like a captured wild beast.

But man grows accustomed to everything, and Gerásim got used, at last, to town life! He had not much to do; his entire duty consisted in keeping the courtyard clean, fetching a cask of water twice a day, hauling and chopping up wood for the kitchen and house,[1] and in not admitting strangers, and keeping watch at night. And it must be said that he discharged his duty with zeal; not a chip was ever strewn about his courtyard, nor any dirt; if in muddy weather the broken-winded nag for hauling water and the barrel entrusted to his care got stranded anywhere, all he had to do was to apply his shoulder,

[1] Formerly all Moscow houses were obliged to get their water in barrels on wheels from the river or from public fountains. Birch-wood is still used for cooking and heating.—Translator.

—and not only the cart, but the horse also, would be pried from the spot. If he undertook to chop wood, his axe would ring like glass, and splinters and billets would fly in every direction; and as for strangers—after he had, one night, caught two thieves, and had banged their heads together, and mauled them so that there was no necessity for taking them to the police-station afterward, every one in the neighbourhood began to respect him greatly, and even by day, passers-by who were not in the least rascals, but simply strangers to him, at the sight of the ominous yard-porter, would brandish their arms as though in self-defence, and shout at him as though he were able to hear their cries.

With all the other domestics Gerásim sustained relations which were not exactly friendly,—they were afraid of him,—but gentle; he regarded them as members of the family. They expressed their meaning to him by signs, and he understood them, accurately executed all orders, but knew his own rights also, and no one dared to take his seat at table. On the whole, Gerásim was of stern and serious disposition, and was fond of orderliness in all things; even the cocks did not venture to fight in his presence—but if they did, woe be to them! if he caught sight of them, he would instantly seize them by the legs, whirl them round like a wheel half a score of times in the air, and hurl them in opposite directions. There

were geese also in his lady mistress's courtyard, but a goose, as every one knows, is a serious and sensible bird; Gerásim felt respect for them, tended them, and fed them; he himself bore a resemblance to a stately gander.

He was allotted a tiny chamber over the kitchen; he arranged it himself after his own taste, constructed a bed of oaken planks on four blocks—truly a bed fit for an epic hero; a hundred puds [1] might have been loaded upon it,—it would not have given way. Under the bed was a stout chest; in one corner stood a small table of the same sturdy quality, and beside the table a three-legged chair, and so firm and squatty that Gerásim himself would pick it up, drop it, and grin. This little den was fastened with a padlock which suggested a *kalátch* [2] in shape, only black; Gerásim always carried the key to this lock with him, in his belt. He was not fond of having people come into his room.

In this manner a year passed, at the end of which a small incident happened to Gerásim.

The old gentlewoman with whom he lived as yard-porter in all things followed the ancient customs, and kept a numerous train of domestics; she had in her house not only laundresses, seamstresses, carpenters, tailors, and dressmakers, but

[1] A pud is about thirty-six pounds, English.—Translator.

[2] A peculiarly shaped and delicious wheaten roll, which is made particularly well in Moscow.—Translator.

also one saddler, who set up to be a veterinary and a medical man for the servants as well (there was a house-physician for the mistress), and, in conclusion, there was a shoemaker, by the name of Kapíton Klímoff, a bitter drunkard. Klímoff regarded himself as an injured being and not appreciated at his true value, a cultured man used to the ways of the capital, who ought not to live in Moscow, without occupation, in a sort of desert spot, and if he drank,—as he himself expressed it, with pauses between his words, and thumping himself on the breast,—he drank in reality from grief. One day he was under discussion by the mistress and her head butler, Gavríla, a man who would seem, from his little yellow eyes and his duck's-bill nose, to have been designated by Fate itself as a commanding personage. The mistress was complaining about the depraved morals of Kapíton, who had been picked up somewhere in the street only the night before.

"Well, Gavríla,"—she suddenly remarked:—"shall not we marry him? What dost thou think about it? Perhaps that will steady him."

"Why should n't we marry him, ma'am? It can be done, ma'am,"—replied Gavríla;—"and it would even be a very good thing."

"Yes; only who would marry him?"

"Of course, ma'am. However, as you like, ma'am. He can always be put to some use, so to

speak; you would n't reject him out of any ten men."

"I think he likes Tatyána?"

Gavríla was about to make some reply, but compressed his lips.

"Yes! . . . let him woo Tatyána,"—the mistress announced her decision, as she took a pinch of snuff with satisfaction:—"dost hear me?"

"I obey, ma'am,"—enunciated Gavríla, and withdrew.

On returning to his chamber (it was situated in a wing, and was almost completely filled with wrought-iron coffers), Gavríla first sent away his wife, and then seated himself by the window, and became engrossed in meditation. The mistress's sudden command had evidently dazed him. At last he rose, and ordered Kapíton to be called. Kapíton presented himself. . . . But before we repeat their conversation to the reader, we consider it not superfluous to state, in a few words, who this Tatyána was, whom Kapíton was to marry, and why his mistress's command had disconcerted the major-domo.

Tatyána, who, as we have said above, served as laundress (but, in her quality of expert and well-trained laundress, she was given only the delicate linen), was a woman of eight-and-twenty, small, thin, fair-haired, with moles on her left cheek. Moles on the left cheek are regarded as a bad sign in Russia—as the presage of an unhappy

life. . . . Tatyána could not boast of her luck. From early youth she had been ill-treated; she had worked for two, and had never received any caresses; she was badly clothed; she received the very smallest of wages; she had practically no relatives; an old butler in the village who had been discharged for uselessness was her uncle, and her other uncles were common peasants,—that is all. At one time she had been a beauty, but her beauty soon left her. She was of extremely meek, or, to put it more accurately, frightened disposition, felt the most complete indifference for herself, and was deadly afraid of other people. Her sole thought was as to how she might finish her work by the appointed time. She never talked with any one, and she trembled at the mere mention of the mistress's name, although she hardly knew her by sight.

When Gerásim was brought from the country, she almost swooned with terror at the sight of his huge form, used all possible efforts to avoid meeting him, and even screwed up her eyes when she was obliged to run past him, as she scurried from the house to the laundry. At first, Gerásim paid no special attention to her, then he began to laugh when she crossed his path; then he began to gaze at her with pleasure, and at last he never took his eyes from her. Whether he had taken a liking to her because of her gentle expression of countenance, or of the timidity of her movements—

God knows! And behold, one day, as she was making her way across the courtyard, cautiously elevating on her outspread fingers a starched wrapper belonging to her mistress . . . some one suddenly grasped her by the elbow; she turned round and fairly screamed aloud: behind her stood Gerásim. Laughing stupidly, and bellowing affectionately, he was offering her a gingerbread cock with gold tinsel on its tail and wings. She tried to refuse it, but he thrust it forcibly straight into her hand, nodded his head, walked away, and, turning round, bellowed once more something of a very friendly nature to her. From that day forth he gave her no peace; wherever she went, he immediately came to meet her, smiled, bellowed, waved his hands, suddenly drew a ribbon from his breast and thrust it into her hand, and cleaned the dust away in front of her with his broom.

The poor girl simply did not know how to take it or what to do. The whole household speedily found out about the pranks of the dumb yard-porter; jeers, jests, stinging remarks showered down on Tatyána. But none of them could bring himself to ridicule Gerásim; the latter was not fond of jests; and they let her alone in his presence. Willy-nilly the girl became his protégée. Like all deaf and dumb people, he was very perspicacious, and understood perfectly well when they were laughing at him or at her. One day,

at dinner, the keeper of the linen, Tatyána's chief, undertook, as the saying is, to banter her, and carried it to such a pitch that the latter, poor creature, did not know where to look, and almost wept with vexation. Gerásim suddenly rose halfway, stretched out his enormous hand, laid it on the head of the keeper of the linen, and glared into her face with such ferocity that the latter fairly bent over the table. All fell silent. Gerásim picked up his spoon again, and went on eating his cabbage-soup. "Just see that dumb devil, that forest fiend!" all muttered under their breaths, and the keeper of the linen rose and went off to the maids' room. On another occasion, observing that Kapíton—that same Kapíton of whom we have just been speaking—was chatting in rather too friendly a manner with Tatyána, Gerásim beckoned the man to him, led him away to the carriage-house, and seizing by its end a shaft which was standing in the corner, he menaced him slightly but significantly with it. From that time forth no one dared to address a word to Tatyána. And all this ran smoothly in his hands. No sooner had the linen-keeper, it is true, run into the maids' hall than she fell down in a swoon, and altogether behaved in such an artful manner, that on that very same day she brought to the knowledge of the mistress Gerásim's rude behaviour; but the capricious old lady merely laughed several times, to the extreme offence of

her linen-keeper, made her repeat, "What didst thou say? Did he bend thee down with his heavy hand?" and on the following day sent a silver ruble to Gerásim. She favoured him as a faithful and powerful watchman. Gerásim held her in decided awe, but, nevertheless, he trusted in her graciousness, and was making ready to betake himself to her with the request that she would permit him to marry Tatyána. He was only waiting for the new kaftan promised him by the major-domo, in order that he might present himself before his mistress in decent shape, when suddenly this same mistress took into her head the idea of marrying Tatyána to Kapíton.

The reader will now be able readily to understand the cause of the perturbation which seized upon Gavríla, the major-domo, after his conversation with his mistress. "The mistress,"—he thought, as he sat by the window,—"of course, favours Gerásim" (this was well known to Gavríla, and therefore he also showed indulgence to him); "still, he is a dumb brute. I can't inform the mistress that Gerásim is courting Tatyána. And, after all, 't is just; what sort of a husband is he? And, on the other hand, Lord forgive! for just as soon as that forest fiend finds out that Tatyána is to be married to Kapíton, he 'll smash everything in the house, by Heaven he will! For you can't reason with him—you can't prevail upon him, the devil that he is, in any

way whatsoever—sinful man that I am to have said so wicked a thing . . . . that 's so!" . . . .

The appearance of Kapíton broke the thread of Gavríla's meditations. The giddy-pated shoemaker entered, threw his hands behind him, and, leaning up against a projecting corner of the wall near the door, in a free-and-easy way he stuck his right leg crosswise in front of the left and shook his head, as much as to say: "Here I am. What 's your will?"

Gavríla looked at Kapíton and began to drum on the jamb of the window with his fingers. Kapíton merely narrowed his leaden eyes a bit, but did not lower them, even smiled slightly and passed his hand over his whitish hair, which stood out in disarray in all directions, as much as to say: "Well, yes, 't is I. What are you staring for?"

"Good,"—said Gavríla, and paused for a space.

"Thou 'rt a nice one,"—remarked Gavríla, and paused awhile.—"A nice person, there 's no denying that!"

Kapíton merely shrugged his shoulders. "And art thou any better, pray?" he said to himself.

"Come, now, just look at thyself; come, look,"—went on Gavríla reprovingly;—"Well, art not thou ashamed of thyself?"

Kapíton surveyed with a calm glance his threadbare and tattered coat and his patched trousers, scanned with particular attention his

shoes perforated with holes, especially the one on whose toe his right foot rested in so dandified a manner, and again fixed his eyes on the major-domo.

"What of it, sir?"

"What of it, sir?"—repeated Gavríla.—"What of it, sir? And thou sayest: 'What of it, sir?' to boot! Thou lookest like the devil,—Lord forgive me, sinful man that I am,—that 's what thou lookest like."

Kapíton winked his little eyes briskly.

"Curse away, curse away, Gavríla Andréitch," he thought to himself.

"Thou hast been drunk again, apparently,"—began Gavríla;—"drunk again, surely? Hey? Come, answer."

"Owing to the feebleness of my health, I have succumbed to spirituous beverages, in fact,"—returned Kapíton.

"Owing to feebleness of health? . . . . Thou art not whipped enough, that 's what; and thou hast served thine apprenticeship in Peter[1] to boot. . . . Much thou didst learn in thine apprenticeship! Thou dost nothing but eat the bread of idleness."

"In that case, Gavríla Andréitch, I have but one judge,—the Lord God Himself, and no one else. He alone knows what sort of a man I am in this world, and whether I really do eat the bread

[1] St. Petersburg.—Translator.

of idleness. And as for thy reflections concerning drunkenness,—in that case also I am not to blame, but rather one of my comrades; for he led me astray, and after he had accomplished his crafty purpose, he went away; that is to say, I . . . ."

" And thou didst remain behind, thou goose, in the street. Akh, thou dissolute man! Well, but that 's not the point,"—went on the major-domo, —" but this. The mistress . . . ." here he paused for a moment,—" it is the mistress's pleasure that thou shouldst marry. Hearest thou? She thinks that thou wilt grow steady when thou art married. Dost understand? "

" How can I help understanding, sir? "

" Well, yes. In my opinion, 't would be better to take thee firmly in hand. Well, but that 's her affair. How now? Dost thou consent? "

Kapíton displayed his teeth in a grin.

" Marriage is a good thing for a man, Gavríla Andréitch; and I, on my part, agree with very great pleasure."

" Well, yes,"—returned Gavríla, and thought to himself:—" there 's no denying it, the man talks with exactness."—" Only, see here,"—he went on, aloud:—" an inconvenient bride has been picked out for thee."

" Who is she, permit me to inquire? " . . .

" Tatyána."

" Tatyána? "

And Kapíton's eyes fairly popped out of his head, and he started away from the wall.

"Well, what art thou scared at? . . . Is n't she to thy taste?"

"To my taste, forsooth, Gavríla Andréitch! The girl herself is all right; she 's a good worker, a meek lass. . . . But you know yourself, Gavríla Andréitch, that that forest fiend, that spectre of the steppes, is courting her, you know . . . ."

"I know, brother, I know all,"—the major-domo interrupted him, with vexation:—"but, seest thou . . . ."

"But, good gracious, Gavríla Andréitch! why, he 'll murder me; by Heaven, he 'll murder me, he 'll mash me like a fly! Why, he has a hand—just look for yourself what a hand he has; why, he simply has the hand of Mínin and Pozhársky.[1] For he 's deaf, he 'll kill me, and not hear that he is killing! He flourishes his huge fists exactly as though he were asleep. And there 's no possibility of stopping him. Why? Because, you know yourself, Gavríla Andréitch, he 's deaf, and stupid as an owl into the bargain. Why, he 's a sort of wild beast, a heathen idol, Gavríla Andréitch,—worse than an idol . . . he 's a sort of aspen-block; why should I now suffer from him?

[1] Mínin, the burgher of Nízhni Nóvgorod, and Prince Pozhársky, who led the Russians against the invading Poles in 1612, and expelled them from Russia. Their expulsion was followed by the election to the throne of the first Románoff Tzar, Mikhaíl Feódorovitch.—TRANSLATOR.

Of course nothing matters to me now; I have endured, I have practised patience, I have smeared myself with oil like a glazed Kolómna jug,—all the same, I 'm a man, and not some sort of insignificant jug, as a matter of fact."

" I know, I know; don't give a description. . . ."

" O Lord, my God! "—went on the shoemaker, hotly:—" when will the end come? When, O Lord! I 'm a miserable wretch, a hopeless wretch. 'T is fate, my fate, when you come to think of it! In my younger years I was thrashed by a German master; in the best period of my life I was beaten by my own brother; and at last, in my riper years, to what have I come? . . ."

" Ekh, limp linden-bast soul! "—said Gavríla. —" Why dost thou dilate on the matter, really, now? "

" What do you mean by ' why,' Gavríla Andréitch? I 'm not afraid of blows, Gavríla Andréitch. Let the master thrash me within doors, but give me a greeting before folks, and still I 'm numbered among men; but in this case, from whom must I . . . ."

" Come, now, begone! "—Gavríla interrupted him, impatiently.

Kapíton turned and took himself off.

" And supposing there were no question of him,"—shouted the major-domo after him;— " dost thou consent? "

"I announce my assent,"—replied Kapíton, and lurched out of the room.

His eloquence did not abandon him even in extremities.

The major-domo paced the length of the room several times.

"Well, now summon Tatyána,"—he said at last.

In a few moments Tatyána entered almost inaudibly, and halted on the threshold.

"What is your command, Gavríla Andréitch?"—she said in a quiet voice.

The major-domo gazed fixedly at her.

"Come,"—said he,—"Tániusha, wouldst thou like to marry? The mistress has hunted up a bridegroom for thee."

"I obey, Gavríla Andréitch. But who has been appointed as my bridegroom?"—she added with hesitation.

"Kapíton, the shoemaker."

"I obey, sir."

"He is a reckless man—that 's a fact. But the mistress pins her hopes on thee in that respect."

"I obey, sir."

"It 's a pity about one thing: . . . . there 's that deaf man, Garáska, who 's paying court to thee. And how hast thou bewitched that bear? I do believe he 'll kill thee, the bear that he is. . . ."

"He will, Gavríla Andréitch, he 'll infallibly kill me."

"He will. . . . Well, we 'll see about that. What makes thee say, 'He 'll kill me'? Has he the right to kill thee, pray? Judge for thyself."

"Why, I don't know, Gavríla Andréitch, whether he has a right or not."

"What a girl! I suppose thou hast not made him any promise. . . ."

"What do you mean, sir?"

The major-domo paused for a while, and thought:

"Thou art a meek soul!"—"Well, very good,"—he added; "we will have another talk about it, and now, go thy way, Tatyána; I see that thou really art an obedient girl."

Tatyána turned, leaned lightly against the door-jamb, and left the room.

"But perhaps the mistress will have forgotten about this wedding by to-morrow,"—meditated the major-domo. "Why have I been alarmed? We 'll pinion that insolent fellow if he makes any trouble—we 'll send word to the police. . . . Ustínya Feódorovna!"—he shouted in a loud voice to his wife, "prepare the samovár, my good woman. . . ."

All that day, Tatyána hardly quitted the laundry. At first she wept, then she wiped away her tears, and set to work as of yore. Kapíton sat until the dead of night in a drinking establishment

with a friend of gloomy aspect, and narrated to him in detail how he had lived in Peter with a certain gentleman who had everything that heart could desire, and was a great stickler for order, and withal permitted himself one little delinquency: he was wont to get awfully fuddled, and as for the feminine sex, he simply had all the qualities to attract. . . His gloomy comrade merely expressed assent; but when Kapíton announced, at last, that, owing to certain circumstances, he must lay violent hands upon himself on the morrow, the gloomy comrade remarked that it was time to go to bed. And they parted churlishly, and in silence.

In the meantime, the major-domo's expectations were not realised. The idea of Kapíton's wedding had so captivated the mistress, that even during the night she had talked of nothing else with one of her companions, whom she kept in the house solely in case of sleeplessness, and who, like night cabmen, slept by day. When Gavríla entered her room after tea with his report, her first question was:

"And how about our wedding?"

He replied, of course, that it was progressing famously, and that Kapíton would present himself to her that same day to thank her.

The mistress was slightly indisposed; she did not occupy herself long with business. The major-domo returned to his own room and called

a council. The matter really did require particular consideration. Tatyána did not make any objection, of course; but Kapíton declared, in the hearing of all, that he had but one head, and not two or three heads. . . . Gerásim gazed surlily and swiftly at everybody, never left the maids' porch, and, apparently, divined that something unpleasant for him was brewing. The assembled company (among them was present the old butler, nicknamed Uncle Tail, to whom all respectfully turned for advice, although all they heard from him was "Yes! yes! yes! yes!") began, by way of precaution, for safety, by locking Kapíton up in the lumber-room with the filtering-machine and set to thinking hard. Of course, it was easy to resort to force; but God forbid! there would be a row, the mistress would get uneasy—and a calamity would ensue! What was to be done?

They thought and thought, and eventually they hit upon something. It had been repeatedly noticed that Gerásim could not abide intoxicated persons. . . . As he sat at the gate, he turned away angrily whenever any man with a load of drink aboard passed him with unsteady steps, and the visor of his cap over his ear. They decided to instruct Tatyána to pretend to be intoxicated, and to walk past Gerásim reeling and staggering. The poor girl would not consent for a long time, but they prevailed upon her; moreover, she herself saw that otherwise she would not be able to

get rid of her adorer. She did it. Kapíton was released from the lumber-room; the affair concerned him, anyhow. Gerásim was sitting on the guard-stone at the gate and jabbing the ground with his shovel. . . . There were people staring at him from round all the corners, from behind the window-shades. . . .

The ruse was completely successful. When first he caught sight of Tatyána, he nodded his head with an affectionate bellow; then he took a closer look, dropped his shovel, sprang to his feet, stepped up to her, put his face close down to her face. . . She reeled worse than ever with terror, and closed her eyes. . . . He seized her by the arm, dashed the whole length of the courtyard, and entering the room where the council was in session with her, he thrust her straight at Kapíton. Tatyána was fairly swooning. . . . Gerásim stood there, glared at her, waved his hand, laughed, and departed, clumping heavily to his little den. . . . For four-and-twenty hours he did not emerge thence. Antípka, the postilion, related afterward how, peeping through a crack, he had beheld Gerásim seated on his bed, with his head resting on his hand, quietly, peaceably, and only bellowing from time to time; then he would rock himself to and fro, cover his eyes, and shake his head, as postilions or stevedores do when they strike up their melancholy chanteys. Antípka was frightened, and he retreated from the crack.

But when, on the following day, Gerásim emerged from his den, no particular change was noticeable in him. He merely seemed to have become more surly, and paid not the slightest attention to Tatyána and Kapíton. On that same evening, both of them, with geese under their arms, wended their way to the mistress, and a week later they were married. On the wedding-day itself, Gerásim did not alter his demeanour in the slightest degree; only, he returned from the river without water: somehow, he had smashed the cask on the road; and at night, in the stable, he so zealously curried his horse that the animal reeled like a blade of grass in a gale, and shifted from foot to foot under his iron fists.

All this took place in the spring. Another year passed, in the course of which Kapíton finally became a thorough-going drunkard, and as a man utterly unfit for anything, was despatched with the train of freight-sledges to a distant village, together with his wife. On the day of departure he made a great show of courage at first, and declared that, no matter where they might send him, even to the place where the peasant-wives wash shirts and put their clothes-beaters in the sky, he would not come to grief; but afterward he became low-spirited, began to complain that he was being taken to uncivilised people, and finally weakened to such a degree that he was unable even to put his own cap on his head. Some compas-

sionate soul pulled it down on his brow, adjusted the visor, and banged it down on top. And when all was ready, and the peasants were already holding the reins in their hands, and only waiting for the word: "With God's blessing!" Gerásim emerged from his tiny chamber, approached Tatyána, and presented her with a souvenir consisting of a red cotton kerchief, which he had bought expressly for her a year before. Tatyána, who up to that moment had borne all the vicissitudes of her life with great equanimity, could hold out no longer, and then and there burst into tears, and, as she took her seat in the cart, exchanged three kisses with Gerásim, in Christian fashion.[1] He wanted to escort her to the town barrier, and at first walked alongside her cart, but suddenly halted at the Crimean Ford, waved his hand and directed his steps along the river.

This happened toward evening. He walked quietly, and stared at the water. Suddenly it seemed to him as though something were floundering in the ooze close to the bank. He bent down, and beheld a small puppy, white with black spots, which, despite all its endeavours, utterly unable to crawl out of the water, was struggling, slipping, and quivering all over its wet, gaunt little body. Gerásim gazed at the unfortunate puppy, picked it up with one hand, thrust it into his breast, and set out with great strides home-

[1] These kisses are bestowed on the cheeks, alternately. —Translator.

ward. He entered his little den, laid the rescued puppy on his bed, covered it with his heavy coat, ran first to the stable for straw, then to the kitchen for a cup of milk. Cautiously throwing back the coat and spreading out the straw, he placed the milk on the bed. The poor little dog was only three weeks old; it had only recently got its eyes open, and one eye even appeared to be a little larger than the other; it did not yet know how to drink out of a cup, and merely trembled and blinked. Gerásim grasped it lightly with two fingers by the head, and bent its muzzle down to the milk. The dog suddenly began to drink greedily, snorting, shaking itself and lapping. Gerásim gazed and gazed, and then suddenly began to laugh. . . . All night he fussed over it, put it to bed, wiped it off, and at last fell asleep himself beside it in a joyous, tranquil slumber.

No mother tends her infant as Gerásim tended his nursling. (The dog proved to be a bitch.) In the beginning she was very weak, puny, and ill-favoured, but little by little she improved in health and looks, and at the end of eight months, thanks to the indefatigable care of her rescuer, she had turned into a very fair sort of a dog of Spanish breed, with long ears, a feathery tail in the form of a trumpet, and large, expressive eyes. She attached herself passionately to Gerásim, never left him by a pace, and was always following him, wagging her tail. And he had given her a name,

too,—the dumb know that their bellowing attracts other people's attention to them:—he called her Mumú. All the people in the house took a liking to her, and also called her dear little Mumú. She was extremely intelligent, fawned upon every one, but loved Gerásim alone. Gerásim himself loved her madly . . . . and it was disagreeable to him when others stroked her: whether he was afraid for her, or jealous of her—God knows! She waked him up in the morning by tugging at his coat-tails; she led to him by the reins the old water-horse, with whom she dwelt in great amity; with importance depicted on her face, she went with him to the river; she stood guard over the brooms and shovels, and allowed no one to enter his room. He cut out an aperture in his door expressly for her, and she seemed to feel that only in Gerásim's little den was she the full mistress, and therefore, on entering it, with a look of satisfaction, she immediately leaped upon the bed. At night she did not sleep at all, but she did not bark without discernment, like a stupid watch-dog, which, sitting on its haunches and elevating its muzzle, and shutting its eyes, barks simply out of tedium, at the stars, and usually three times in succession; no! Mumú's shrill voice never resounded without cause! Either a stranger was approaching too close to the fence, or some suspicious noise or rustling had arisen somewhere. . . . . In a word, she kept capital watch.

Truth to tell, there was, in addition to her, an old dog in the courtyard, yellow in hue speckled with dark brown, Peg-top by name (*Voltchók*); but that dog was never unchained, even by night, and he himself, owing to his decrepitude, did not demand freedom, but lay there, curled up in his kennel, and only now and then emitted a hoarse, almost soundless bark, which he immediately broke off short, as though himself conscious of its utter futility.

Mumú did not enter the manor-house, and when Gerásim carried wood to the rooms she always remained behind and impatiently awaited him, with ears pricked up, and her head turning now to the right, then suddenly to the left, at the slightest noise indoors. . . .

In this manner still another year passed. Gerásim continued to discharge his avocations as yard-porter and was very well satisfied with his lot, when suddenly an unexpected incident occurred. . . . Namely, one fine summer day the mistress, with her hangers-on, was walking about the drawing-room. She was in good spirits, and was laughing and jesting; the hangers-on were laughing and jesting also, but felt no particular mirth; the people of the household were not very fond of seeing the mistress in merry mood, because, in the first place, at such times she demanded instantaneous and complete sympathy from every one, and flew into a rage if there was a face which

did not beam with satisfaction; and, in the second place, these fits did not last very long, and were generally succeeded by a gloomy and cross-grained frame of mind. On that day, she seemed to have got up happily; at cards, she held four knaves: the fulfilment of desire (she always told fortunes with the cards in the morning),—and her tea struck her as particularly delicious, in consequence whereof the maid received praise in words and ten kopéks in money. With a sweet smile on her wrinkled lips, the lady of the house strolled about her drawing-room and approached the window. A flower-garden was laid out in front of the window, and in the very middle of the border, under a rose-bush, lay Mumú assiduously gnawing a bone. The mistress caught sight of her.

"My God!"—she suddenly exclaimed;—"what dog is that?"

The hanger-on whom the mistress addressed floundered, poor creature, with that painful uneasiness which generally takes possession of a dependent person when he does not quite know how he is to understand his superior's exclamation.

"I . . . d . . do . . . . on't know, ma'am," she stammered; "I think it belongs to the dumb man."

"My God!"—her mistress interrupted her:—"why, it is a very pretty dog! Order it to be

brought hither. Has he had it long? How is it that I have not seen it before? . . . Order it to be brought hither."

The hanger-on immediately fluttered out into the anteroom.

"Man, man!"—she screamed,—"bring Mumú here at once! She is in the flower-garden."

"And so her name is Mumú,"—said the mistress;—"a very nice name."

"Akh, very nice indeed, ma'am!"—replied the dependent.—"Be quick, Stepán!"

Stepán, a sturdy young fellow, who served as footman, rushed headlong to the garden and tried to seize Mumú; but the latter cleverly slipped out of his fingers, and elevating her tail, set off at full gallop to Gerásim, who was in the kitchen beating out and shaking out the water-cask, twirling it about in his hands like a child's drum. Stepán ran after her, and tried to seize her at the very feet of her master; but the agile dog would not surrender herself into the hands of a stranger, and kept leaping and evading him. Gerásim looked on at all this tumult with a grin; at last Stepán rose in wrath, and hastily gave him to understand by signs that the mistress had ordered the dog to be brought to her. Gerásim was somewhat surprised, but he called Mumú, lifted her from the ground, and handed her to Stepán. Stepán carried her into the drawing-room, and placed her on the polished wood floor. The mistress

began to call the dog to her in a caressing voice. Mumú, who had never in her life been in such magnificent rooms, was extremely frightened, and tried to dart through the door, but, rebuffed by the obsequious Stepán, fell to trembling, and crouched against the wall.

"Mumú, Mumú, come hither to me,"—said the mistress;—"come, thou stupid creature . . . . don't be afraid. . . ."

"Come, Mumú, come to the mistress,"—repeated the dependents;—"come!"

But Mumú looked anxiously about and did not stir from the spot.

"Bring her something to eat,"—said the mistress.—"What a stupid thing she is! She won't come to the mistress. What is she afraid of?"

"She feels strange still,"—remarked one of the dependents, in a timid and imploring voice.

Stepán brought a saucer of milk and set it in front of Mumú, but Mumú did not even smell of the milk, and kept on trembling and gazing about her, as before.

"Akh, who ever saw such a creature!"—said the mistress, as she approached her, bent down and was on the point of stroking her; but Mumú turned her head and displayed her teeth in a snarl. —The mistress hastily drew back her hand.

A momentary silence ensued. Mumú whined faintly, as though complaining and excusing herself. . . The mistress retreated and frowned.

The dog's sudden movement had frightened her.

"Akh!"—cried all the dependents with one accord:—"She did n't bite you, did she? God forbid!" (Mumú had never bitten any one in her life.) "Akh! akh!"

"Take her away,"—said the old woman, in an altered voice,—"the horrid little dog! What a vicious beast she is!"

And slowly turning, she went toward her boudoir. The dependents exchanged timorous glances and started to follow her, but she paused, looked coldly at them, said: "Why do you do that? for I have not bidden you," and left the room.

The dependents waved their hands in despair at Stepán; the latter picked up Mumú and flung her out into the yard as speedily as possible, straight at Gerásim's feet; and half an hour later a profound stillness reigned in the house, and the old gentlewoman sat on her divan more lowering than a thunder-cloud.

What trifles, when one comes to think of it, can sometimes put a person out of tune!

The lady was out of sorts until evening, talked with no one, did not play cards, and passed a bad night. She took it into her head that they had not given her the same *eau de cologne* which they usually gave her, that her pillow smelled of soap, and made the keeper of the linen-closet smell

all the bed-linen twice,—in a word, she was upset and extremely incensed. On the following morning she ordered Gavríla to be summoned to her presence an hour earlier than usual.

"Tell me, please,"—she began, as soon as the latter, not without some inward quaking, had crossed the threshold of her boudoir,—"why that dog was barking in our courtyard all night long? It prevented my getting to sleep!"

"A dog, ma'am . . . . which one, ma'am? . . . Perhaps it was the dumb man's dog,"—he uttered in a voice that was not altogether firm.

"I don't know whether it belongs to the dumb man or to some one else, only it interfered with my sleep. And I am amazed that there is such a horde of dogs! I want to know about it. We have a watch-dog, have we not?"

"Yes, ma'am, we have, ma'am, Peg-top, ma'am."

"Well, what need have we for any more dogs? They only create disorder. There 's no head to the house,—that 's what 's the matter. And what does the dumb man want of a dog? Who has given him permission to keep a dog in my courtyard? Yesterday I went to the window, and it was lying in the garden; it had brought some nasty thing there, and was gnawing it,—and I have roses planted there. . . ."

The lady paused for a while.

"See that it is removed this very day . . . . dost hear me?"

"I obey, ma'am."

"This very day. And now, go. I will have thee called for thy report later."

Gavríla left the room.

As he passed through the drawing-room, the major-domo transferred a small bell from one table to another, for show, softly blew his duck's-bill nose in the hall, and went out into the anteroom. In the anteroom, on a locker, Stepán was sleeping in the attitude of a slain warrior in a battalion picture, with his bare legs projecting from his coat, which served him in lieu of a coverlet.

The major-domo nudged him, and imparted to him in an undertone some order, to which Stepán replied with a half-yawn, half-laugh. The major-domo withdrew, and Stepán sprang to his feet, drew on his kaftan and his boots, went out and came to a standstill on the porch. Five minutes had not elapsed before Gerásim made his appearance with a huge fagot of firewood on his back, accompanied by his inseparable Mumú. (The mistress had issued orders that her bedroom and boudoir were to be heated even in summer.) Gerásim stood sideways to the door, gave it a push with his shoulder, and precipitated himself into the house with his burden. Mumú, according to her wont, remained behind to wait for

him. Then Stepán, seizing a favourable moment, made a sudden dash at her, like a hawk pouncing on a chicken, crushed her to the ground with his breast, gathered her up in his arms, and without stopping to don so much as his cap, ran out into the street with her, jumped into the first drozhky that came to hand, and galloped off to the Game Market. There he speedily hunted up a purchaser, to whom he sold her for half a ruble, stipulating only that the latter should keep her tied up for at least a week, and immediately returned home; but before he reached the house, he alighted from the drozhky, and making a circuit of the house, he leaped over the fence into the yard from a back alley; he was afraid to enter by the wicket, lest he should encounter Gerásim.

But his anxiety was wasted; Gerásim was no longer in the courtyard. On coming out of the house he had instantly bethought himself of Mumú; he could not remember that she had ever failed to await his return, and he began to run in every direction to hunt for her, to call her after his own fashion . . . he dashed into his little chamber, to the hay-loft; he darted into the street, —hither and thither. . . . She was gone! He appealed to the domestics, with the most despairing signs inquired about her; pointing fourteen inches from the ground, he drew her form with his hands. . . . Some of them really did not know what had become of Mumú, and only shook their

heads; others did know and grinned at him in reply, but the major-domo assumed a very pompous mien and began to shout at the coachmen. Then Gerásim fled far away from the courtyard.

Twilight was already falling when he returned. One was justified in assuming, from his exhausted aspect, from his unsteady gait, from his dusty clothing, that he had wandered over the half of Moscow. He halted in front of the mistress's windows, swept a glance over the porch on which seven house-serfs were gathered, turned away, and bellowed once more: "Mumú!"—Mumú did not respond. He went away. All stared after him, but no one smiled, no one uttered a word . . . and the curious postilion, Antípka, narrated on the following morning in the kitchen, that the dumb man had moaned all night long.

All the following day Gerásim did not show himself, so that Potáp the coachman was obliged to go for water in his stead, which greatly displeased coachman Potáp. The mistress asked Gavríla whether her command had been executed. Gavríla replied that it had. The next morning Gerásim emerged from his chamber to do his work. He came to dinner, ate and went off again, without having exchanged greetings with any one. His face, which was inanimate at the best of times, as is the case with all deaf and dumb persons, now seemed to have become absolutely petrified. After dinner he again quitted

the courtyard, but not for long, returned and immediately directed his steps to the hay-barn. Night came, a clear, moonlight night. Sighing heavily and incessantly tossing from side to side, Gerásim was lying there, when he suddenly felt as though something were tugging at the skirts of his garments; he trembled all over, but did not raise his head, nevertheless, and even screwed his eyes up tight; but the tugging was repeated, more energetically than before; he sprang to his feet . . . . before him, with a fragment of rope about her neck, Mumú was capering about. A prolonged shriek of joy burst from his speechless breast; he seized Mumú and clasped her in a close embrace; in one moment she had licked his nose, his eyes, and his beard. . . He stood still for a while, pondering, cautiously slipped down from the hay-mow, cast a glance round him, and having made sure that no one was watching him, he safely regained his little chamber.

Even before this Gerásim had divined that the dog had not disappeared of her own volition; that she must have been carried away by the mistress's command; for the domestics had explained to him by signs how his Mumú had snapped at her —and he decided to take precautions of his own. First he fed Mumú with some bread, caressed her, and put her to bed; then he began to consider how he might best conceal her. At last he hit upon

the idea of leaving her all day in his room, and only looking in now and then to see how she was getting along, and taking her out for exercise at night. He closed the opening in his door compactly by stuffing in an old coat of his, and as soon as it was daylight he was in the courtyard, as though nothing had happened, even preserving (innocent guile!) his former dejection of countenance. It could not enter the head of the poor deaf man that Mumú would betray herself by her whining; as a matter of fact, every one in the house was speedily aware that the dumb man's dog had come back and was locked up in his room; but out of compassion for him and for her, and partly, perhaps, out of fear of him, they did not give him to understand that his secret had been discovered.

The major-domo alone scratched the back of his head and waved his hand in despair, as much as to say: "Well, I wash my hands of the matter! Perhaps the mistress will not get to know of it!" And never had the dumb man worked so zealously as on that day; he swept and scraped out the entire courtyard, he rooted up all the blades of grass to the very last one, with his own hand pulled up all the props in the garden-fence, with a view to making sure that they were sufficiently firm, and then hammered them in again, —in a word, he fussed and bustled about so, that even the mistress noticed his zeal.

Twice in the course of the day Gerásim went stealthily to his captive; and when night came, he lay down to sleep in her company, in the little room, not in the hay-barn, and only at one o'clock did he go out to take a stroll with her in the fresh air. Having walked quite a long time with her in the courtyard, he was preparing to return, when suddenly a noise resounded outside the fence in the direction of the alley. Mumú pricked up her ears, began to growl, approached the fence, sniffed, and broke forth into a loud and piercing bark. Some drunken man or other had taken it into his head to nestle down there for the night. At that very moment, the mistress had just got to sleep after a prolonged "nervous excitement"; she always had these excited fits after too hearty a supper. The sudden barking woke her; her heart began to beat violently, and to collapse.

"Maids, maids!"—she moaned.—"Maids!"

The frightened maids flew to her bedroom.

"Okh, okh, I 'm dying!"—said she, throwing her hands apart in anguish.—"There 's that dog again, again! . . . Okh, send for the doctor! They want to kill me. . . The dog, the dog again! Okh!"

And she flung back her head, which was intended to denote a swoon.

They ran for the doctor, that is to say, for the household medical man, Kharitón. The whole art of this healer consisted in the fact that he wore

boots with soft soles, understood how to feel the pulse delicately, slept fourteen hours out of the twenty-four, spent the rest of the time in sighing, and was incessantly treating the mistress to laurel drops. This healer immediately hastened to her, fumigated with burnt feathers, and when the mistress opened her eyes, immediately presented to her on a silver tray a wine-glass with the inevitable drops.

The mistress took them, but immediately, with tearful eyes, began to complain of the dog, of Gavríla, of her lot, that she, a poor old woman, had been abandoned by every one, that no one had any pity on her, and that every one desired her death. In the meantime the unlucky Mumú continued to bark, while Gerásim strove in vain to call her away from the fence.

"There . . . there . . . . it goes again! . . ." stammered the mistress, and again rolled up her eyes. The medical man whispered to one of the maids; she rushed into the anteroom, and explained matters to Stepán; the latter ran to awaken Gavríla, and Gavríla, in a passion, gave orders that the whole household should be roused.

Gerásim turned round, beheld the twinkling lights and shadows in the windows, and, foreboding in his heart a catastrophe, he caught up Mumú under his arm, ran into his room and locked the door. A few moments later, five men were thumping at his door, but feeling the re-

sistance of the bolt, desisted. Gavríla ran up in a frightful hurry, ordered them all to remain there until morning and stand guard, while he himself burst into the maids' hall and gave orders through the eldest companion, Liubóff [1] Liubímovna,—together with whom he was in the habit of stealing and enjoying tea, sugar, and other groceries,—that the mistress was to be informed that the dog, unfortunately, had run home again from somewhere or other, but that it would not be alive on the morrow, and that the mistress must do them the favour not to be angry, and must calm down. The mistress probably would not have calmed down very speedily, had not the medical man, in his haste, poured out forty drops instead of twelve. The strength of the laurel took its effect —in a quarter of an hour the mistress was sleeping soundly and peacefully, and Gerásim was lying, all pale, on his bed, tightly compressing Mumú's mouth.

On the following morning the mistress awoke quite late. Gavríla was waiting for her awakening in order to make a decisive attack upon Gerásim's asylum, and was himself prepared to endure a heavy thunder-storm. But the thunder-storm did not come off. As she lay in bed, the mistress ordered the eldest dependent to be called to her.

"Liubóff Liubímovna,"—she began in a soft, weak voice; she sometimes liked to pretend to

[1] Amy or Charity.—Translator.

be a persecuted and defenceless sufferer; it is needless to state that at such times all the people in the house felt very uncomfortable:—"Liubóff Liubímovna, you see what my condition is; go, my dear, to Gavríla Andréitch, and have a talk with him; it cannot be possible that some nasty little dog or other is more precious to him than the tranquillity, the very life of his mistress! I should not like to believe that,"—she added, with an expression of profound emotion:—"Go, my dear, be so good, go to Gavríla Andréitch."

Liubóff Liubímovna betook herself to Gavríla's room. What conversation took place between them is not known; but a while later a whole throng of domestics marched through the courtyard in the direction of Gerásim's little den; in front walked Gavríla, holding on his cap with his hand, although there was no wind; around him walked footmen and cooks; Uncle Tail gazed out of the window, and issued orders—that is to say, he merely spread his hands apart; in the rear of all, the small urchins leaped and capered, one half of them being strangers who had run in. On the narrow stairway leading to the den sat one sentry; at the door stood two others with clubs. They began to ascend the staircase, and occupied it to its full length. Gavríla went to the door, knocked on it with his fist, and shouted:

"Open!"

A suppressed bark made itself audible; but there was no reply.

"Open, I say!"—he repeated.

"But, Gavríla Andréitch,"—remarked Stepán from below:—"he 's deaf, you know—he does n't hear."

All burst out laughing.

"What is to be done?"—retorted Gavríla from the top of the stairs.

"Why, he has a hole in his door,"—replied Stepán;—"so do you wiggle a stick around in it a bit."

Gavríla bent down.

"He has stuffed it up with some sort of coat, that hole."

"But do you poke the coat inward."

At this point another dull bark rang out.

"See there, see there, she 's giving herself away!"—some one remarked in the crowd, and again there was laughter.

Gavríla scratched behind his ear.

"No, brother,"—he went on at last;—"do thou poke the coat through thyself, if thou wishest."

"Why, certainly!"

And Stepán scrambled up, took a stick, thrust the coat inside, and began to wiggle the stick about in the opening, saying: "Come forth, come forth!" He was still wiggling the stick when the door of the little chamber flew suddenly and swiftly open—and the whole train of menials

rolled head over heels down the stairs, Gavríla in the lead. Uncle Tail shut the window.

"Come, come, come, come!"—shouted Gavríla from the courtyard;—"just look out, look out!"

Gerásim stood motionless on the threshold. The crowd assembled at the foot of the staircase. Gerásim stared at all these petty folk in their foreign kaftans from above, with his arms lightly set akimbo; in his scarlet peasant shirt he seemed like a giant in comparison with them. Gavríla advanced a pace.

"See here, brother,"—said he:—"I 'll take none of thy impudence."

And he began to explain to him by signs: "The mistress insists upon having thy dog: hand it over instantly, or 't will be the worse for thee."

Gerásim looked at him, pointed to the dog, made a sign with his hand at his own neck, as though he were drawing up a noose, and cast an inquiring glance at the major-domo.

"Yes, yes,"—replied the latter, nodding his head;—"yes, she insists."

Gerásim dropped his eyes, then suddenly shook himself, again pointed at Mumú, who all this time had been standing by his side, innocently wagging her tail and moving her ears to and fro with curiosity, repeated the sign of strangling over his own neck, and significantly smote himself on the breast, as though declaring that he would take it upon himself to annihilate Mumú.

"But thou wilt deceive,"—waved Gavríla to him in reply.

Gerásim looked at him, laughed disdainfully, smote himself again on the breast, and slammed the door.

All present exchanged glances in silence.

"Well, and what 's the meaning of this?"—began Gavríla.—"He has locked himself in."

"Let him alone, Gavríla Andréitch,"—said Stepán;—"he 'll do it, if he has promised. That 's the sort of fellow he is. . . . If he once promises a thing, it 's safe. He is n't like us folks in that respect. What is true is true. Yes."

"Yes,"—repeated all, and wagged their heads. —"That 's so. Yes."

Uncle Tail opened the window and said "Yes," also.

"Well, we shall see, I suppose,"—returned Gavríla;—"but the guard is not to be removed, notwithstanding. Hey, there, Eróshka!"—he added, addressing a poor man in a yellow nankeen kazák coat, who was reckoned as the gardener:—"what hast thou to do? Take a stick and sit here, and if anything happens, run for me on the instant."

Eróshka took a stick and sat down on the last step of the staircase. The crowd dispersed, with the exception of a few curious bodies and the small urchins, while Gavríla returned home, and

through Liubóff Liubímovna gave orders that the mistress should be informed that everything had been done, and that he himself, in order to make quite sure, had sent the postilion for a policeman. The mistress tied a knot in her handkerchief, poured *eau de cologne* on it, sniffed at it, wiped her temples, sipped her tea and, being still under the influence of the laurel drops, fell asleep again.

An hour after all this commotion, the door of the tiny den opened and Gerásim made his appearance. He wore a new holiday kaftan; he was leading Mumú by a string. Eróshka drew aside and let him pass. Gerásim directed his way toward the gate. All the small boys who were in the courtyard followed him with their eyes in silence. He did not even turn round; he did not put on his cap until he reached the street. Gavríla despatched after him that same Eróshka, in the capacity of observer. Eróshka, perceiving from afar that he had entered an eating-house in company with his dog, awaited his reappearance.

In the eating-house they knew Gerásim and understood his signs. He ordered cabbage-soup with meat, and seated himself, with his arms resting on the table. Mumú stood beside his chair, calmly gazing at him with her intelligent eyes. Her coat was fairly shining with gloss: it was evident that she had recently been brushed. They brought the cabbage-soup to Gerásim. He crumbled up bread in it, cut the meat up into

small pieces, and set the plate on the floor. Mumú began to eat with her customary politeness, hardly touching her muzzle to the food; Gerásim stared long at her; two heavy tears rolled suddenly from his eyes; one fell on the dog's sloping forehead, the other into the soup. He covered his face with his hand. Mumú ate half a plateful and retired, licking her chops. Gerásim rose, paid for the soup, and set out, accompanied by the somewhat astounded glance of the waiter. Eróshka, on catching sight of Gerásim, sprang round the corner, and allowing him to pass, again set out on his track.

Gerásim walked on without haste, and did not release Mumú from the cord. On reaching the corner of the street he halted, as though in thought, and suddenly directed his course, with swift strides, straight toward the Crimean Ford. On the way he entered the yard of a house, to which a wing was being built, and brought thence two bricks under his arm. From the Crimean Ford he turned along the bank, advanced to a certain spot, where stood two boats with oars, tied to stakes (he had already noted them previously), and sprang into one of them, in company with Mumú. A lame little old man emerged from behind a hut placed in one corner of a vegetable-garden, and shouted at him. But Gerásim only nodded his head, and set to rowing so vigorously, although against the current, that in an

instant he had darted off to a distance of a hundred fathoms. The old man stood and stood, scratched his back, first with the left hand then with the right, and returned, limping, to his hut.

But Gerásim rowed on and on. And now he had left Moscow behind him. Now, already meadows, fields, groves stretched along the shores, and peasant cottages made their appearance. It smacked of the country. He flung aside the oars, bent his head down to Mumú, who was sitting in front of him on a dry thwart,—the bottom was inundated with water,—and remained motionless, with his mighty hands crossed on her back, while the boat drifted a little backward with the current toward the town. At last Gerásim straightened up hastily, with a sort of painful wrath on his face, wound the rope around the bricks he had taken, arranged a noose, put it on Mumú's neck, lifted her over the river, for the last time gazed at her. . . . She gazed back at him confidingly and without alarm, waving her little tail slightly. He turned away, shut his eyes, and opened his hands. . . Gerásim heard nothing, neither the swift whine of the falling Mumú, nor the loud splash of the water; for him the noisiest day was silent and speechless, as not even the quietest night is to us, and when he opened his eyes again, the little waves were hurrying down the river as before; as before they were plashing

about the sides of the boat, and only far astern toward the shore certain broad circles were spreading.

Eróshka, as soon as Gerásim vanished from his sight, returned home and reported what he had seen.

"Well, yes,"—remarked Stepán;—"he will drown her. You may be easy about that. If he has once promised a thing . . . ."

Throughout the day no one saw Gerásim. He did not dine at home. Evening came; all, except him, assembled for supper.

"What a queer fellow that Gerásim is!"—squealed a fat laundress. "The idea of making such a fuss over a dog! . . . Really!"

"But Gerásim has been here,"—suddenly exclaimed Stepán, as he scooped up his buckwheat groats with his spoon.

"What? When?"

"Why, a couple of hours ago. Certainly he has! I met him at the gate; he has gone away from here again; he went out of the courtyard. I wanted to ask him about his dog, but he evidently was out of sorts. Well, and he jostled me; it must have been done by accident, he only wanted to get me out of the way; as much as to say: 'Don't bother me!'—but he gave me such a dig in the spine, that óï, óï, óï!"—And Stepán shrugged his shoulders with an involuntary grimace, and rubbed the nape of his neck.—"Yes,"

—he added;—"his hand is an apt one, there 's no denying that!"

All laughed at Stepán and, after supper, dispersed to their beds.

And in the meantime, on that same night, on the T*** highway, a giant was marching onward diligently and unremittingly, with a sack on his shoulders, and a long staff in his hands. It was Gerásim. He was hurrying on, without looking behind him, hurrying home, to his own house in the country, to his native place. After drowning poor Mumú, he had hastened to his little den, had briskly put together a few articles of clothing in an old horse-cloth, had tied it up with a knot, slung it across his shoulder, and taken himself off. He had noted well the road when he had been brought to Moscow; the village from which his mistress had taken him lay at most five-and-twenty versts from the highway. He walked along it with a certain invincible hardihood, with despairing, yet joyful firmness. He strode onward, his breast expanded broadly; his eyes were bent eagerly straight ahead. He hastened onward as though his aged mother were waiting for him in his native place, as though she had summoned him to her after long wanderings in foreign lands, among strange peoples. . . The summer night, which had only just descended, was warm and tranquil; on the one hand, in the direction where the sun had gone down, the rim

of the sky was still white, with a crimson gleam from the last reflection of the vanished day,—on the other hand, the blue-grey gloom was rising. Night had come thence. Hundreds of quail were whistling all around, corn-crakes were vying with each other in their calls. . . . Gerásim could not hear them, he could not hear even the delicate nocturnal rustling of the trees past which he was bearing his mighty feet, but he discerned the familiar scent of the ripening rye, which was exhaled from the dark fields; he felt the breeze wafting to meet him,—the breeze from his native place,—beating on his face, playing with his hair and beard; he beheld in front of him the road homeward, gleaming white, straight as an arrow; he beheld in the sky innumerable stars, which illuminated his path, and like a lion he stepped out powerfully and alertly, so that when the rising sun lighted up with its moistly-crimson rays the gallant fellow who had just been driven to extremities, three-and-thirty versts already lay between him and Moscow. . . .

At the end of two days he was at home in his own little cottage, to the great amazement of the soldier's wife who had removed thither. After praying before the holy pictures, he immediately betook himself to the overseer. The overseer was astounded at first; but the haying was only just beginning. Gerásim, being a capital workman, immediately had a scythe put into his hand—

and he went off to mow as of yore, to mow in such fashion that the peasants simply sweated through and through as they watched his swings and strokes. . . .

But in Moscow, on the day following Gerásim's flight, they discovered it. They went into his room, ransacked it, and told Gavríla. The latter came, made an inspection, shrugged his shoulders, and decided that the dumb man had either run away or drowned himself along with his stupid dog. The police were informed, and the matter was reported to the mistress. The mistress flew into a rage, fell to weeping, ordered him to be hunted up at any cost, asserted that she had never ordered the dog to be made away with, and, at last, so berated Gavríla, that the latter did nothing all day but shake his head and add: "Well!" until Uncle Tail brought him to his senses by saying to him: "We-ell!" At last news came from the village of Gerásim's arrival there. The mistress calmed down somewhat; at first she was minded to issue an order demanding his immediate return to Moscow, but afterward she announced that she wanted nothing to do with so ungrateful a man. Moreover, she died herself soon after, and her heirs had other things to think about besides Gerásim; and they dismissed the rest of their mother's serfs on quit-rent.

And Gerásim is living yet, poor, wretched fel-

low, in his lonely hut; he is healthy and powerful as of yore, and, as of yore, he does the work of four men, and, as of yore, he is staid and dignified. But the neighbours have noticed that ever since his return from Moscow he has entirely ceased to have anything to do with women, he does not even look at them, and he keeps not a single dog on his premises.—"However,"—say the peasants,—"'t is lucky for him that he needs no woman; and as for a dog—what should he do with a dog? you could n't drag a thief into his yard with a noose!" Such is the fame of the dumb man's heroic strength.

THE INN

(1852)

THE INN

ON the great B*** highway, almost equidistant from the two county towns through which it passes, there was still standing, not long since, a spacious inn, very well known to drivers of tróïka-teams, to freight-sledge peasants, to merchants' clerks, to traders of the petty-burgher class, and, in general, to all the numerous and varied travellers, who at all seasons of the year roll along our roads. Everybody used to drop in at this inn; except only some landed proprietor's carriage, drawn by six home-bred horses, would glide solemnly past, which, however, did not prevent the coachman and the lackey on the foot-board from looking with particular feeling and attention at the porch but too familiar to them; or some very poor fellow, in a rickety cart, with fifteen kopéks in the purse stuffed into his bosom, on coming to the fine inn, would urge on his weak nag, hastening to his night's lodging in the suburb on the great highway, to the house of the peasant-host, where you will find nothing except hay and bread, but, on the other hand, will not be obliged to pay a kopék too much.

In addition to its advantageous situation, the

inn of which we have just spoken possessed many attractions: capital water in two deep wells with creaking wheels and iron buckets on chains; a spacious stable-yard with plenty of board sheds on stout pillars; an abundant supply of good oats in the cellar; a warm house, with a huge Russian stove, into which, as upon the shoulders of an epic hero, long logs were thrust; two fairly-clean little chambers with reddish-lilac paper on the walls somewhat tattered at the bottom, with a painted wooden divan, chairs to match, and two pots of geranium in the windows, which, however, were never washed and were dim with the dust of many years. This inn offered other comforts:—the blacksmith's shop was near at hand, and the mill was situated almost alongside of it; in conclusion, good food was to be had in it, thanks to the fat and rosy-cheeked peasant-woman who was the cook, and who prepared the viands in a savoury manner and with plenty of fat, and was not stingy of her stores; the nearest dram-shop was only half a verst distant; the landlord kept snuff, which, although mixed with ashes, was extremely heady, and tickled the nose agreeably: in a word, there were many reasons why guests of every sort were not lacking in that inn. Travellers had taken a fancy to it—that is the principal thing; without that, as is well known, no business will thrive; and it was liked most of all because, as people said in the country-

side, the landlord himself was very lucky and succeeded in all his enterprises, although he little deserved his luck, and it was evident that if a man is destined to be lucky he will be.

This landlord was a petty burgher, Naúm Ivánoff by name. He was of medium stature, thickset, stooping and broad-shouldered; he had a large, round head, hair which was wavy and already grizzled, although in appearance he was not over forty years of age; a plump and rosy face, a low, but white and smooth brow, and small, bright blue eyes, with which he gazed forth very strangely—askance, and, at the same time, insolently, which is a combination rarely encountered. He always held his head in a drooping position, and turned it with difficulty, perhaps because his neck was very short; he walked briskly and did not swing his arms, but opened his clenched fists as he walked. When he smiled,—and he smiled frequently, but without laughter, as though to himself,—his large lips moved apart in an unpleasant way, and displayed a row of compact and dazzling teeth. He spoke abruptly, and with a certain surly sound in his voice. He shaved off his beard, but did not adopt the foreign dress. His garments consisted of a long, extremely-threadbare kaftan, ample bag-trousers, and shoes worn on the bare feet. He often absented himself from home on business,—and he had a great deal of business: he was a jobber of

horses, he hired land, he raised vegetables for the market, he purchased gardens, and in general occupied himself with various commercial speculations,—but his absences never lasted long; like the hawk, to whom in particular, especially as to the expression of his eyes, he bore a strong resemblance, he kept returning to his nest. He understood how to keep that nest in order; he kept track of everything, he heard everything, and gave orders about everything; he dealt out, he served out, and calculated everything himself, and while he did not reduce his price a kopék to any one, yet he did not overcharge.

The lodgers did not enter into conversation with him, and he himself was not fond of wasting words without cause. "I need your money, and you need my victuals," he was wont to explain, as though he were tearing off each separate word: "you and I have n't got to stand godparents to a child and become cronies; the traveller has eaten, I have fed him his fill, let him not outstay his welcome. And if he is sleepy, then let him sleep, not chatter." He kept sturdy and healthy, but tame and submissive labourers; they were extremely afraid of him. He never took a drop of intoxicating liquor into his mouth, but he gave each of them ten kopéks for vodka on festival days; on other days they did not dare to drink. People like Naúm speedily grow rich; . . . . but Naúm Ivánoff had not reached the brilliant con-

dition in which he found himself—and he was reckoned to be worth forty or fifty thousand rubles—by straightforward ways. . . .

Twenty years previous to the date at which we have set the beginning of our story, an inn existed on that same site upon the highway. Truth to tell, it had not that dark-red plank roof which imparted to Naúm Ivánoff's house the aspect of a nobleman's manor-house; and it was poorer in its construction, and the sheds in the stable-yard were thatched, and the walls were made of wattled boughs instead of boards; neither was it distinguished by a triangular Greek pediment on turned columns; but it was a very decent sort of inn, nevertheless,—spacious, solid, and warm,—and travellers gladly frequented it. Its landlord at that time was not Naúm Ivánoff, but a certain Akím Semyónoff, the serf of a neighbouring landed proprietress, Lizavéta Prókhorovna Kuntze—the widow of a staff-officer. This Akím was an intelligent peasant, with good business capacity, who, having started with two wretched little nags as a carrier, in his youth, returned a year later with three good horses, and from that time forth spent the greater part of his life in roaming along the highways, visited Kazán and Odessa, Orenbúrg and Warsaw, and went abroad to "Lipetzk,"[1] and travelled toward the last with two tróïkas of huge and powerful stal-

[1] Leipzig.

lions harnessed to two enormous carts. Whether it was that he became bored by this homeless, roving life, or whether he was seized with the desire to set up a family (in one of his absences his wife had died; the children which he had had died also), at all events he decided, at last, to abandon his former avocation and set up an inn.

With the permission of his mistress, he established himself on the highway, purchased in her name half a *desyatína*[1] of land, and erected thereon an inn. The venture proved a success. He had more than enough money for the installation; the experience which he had acquired in his prolonged wanderings to all parts of Russia was of the greatest advantage to him: he knew how to please travellers, especially men of his own former calling,—three-horse-team carriers,—with many of whom he was personally acquainted, and whose patronage is particularly valued by the tavern-keepers: so much do these people eat and consume for themselves and their robust horses. Akím's inn became known for hundreds of versts round about. . . . People were even fonder of patronising him than they were of patronising Naúm, who afterward succeeded him, although Akím was far from being comparable to Naúm in his knowledge of the landlord's business.

Akím had everything established on the old-

[1] A *desyatína* is 2.70 acres. He was obliged to buy the land in his owner's name: serfs could not hold landed property.—Translator.

fashioned footing,—warm but not quite clean; and it sometimes happened that his oats turned out to be light, or damp, and the food also was prepared in rather indifferent fashion; such victuals were sometimes served on his table as had been better left in the oven for good, and that not because he was stingy with material, but just because it happened so—his wife had not looked after things. On the other hand, he was ready to deduct from the price, and he would even not refuse to give credit. In a word, he was a good man and an amiable landlord. He was liberal also with his conversation and standing treat; over the samovár he would sometimes get to babbling so that you would prick up your ears, especially when he began to talk about Peter,[1] about the Tcherkessian steppes, or about foreign parts; well, and as a matter of course, he was fond of drinking with a nice man, only not to excess, and more for the sake of sociability—so travellers said of him.

Merchants bore great good-will toward him, as, in general, did all those people who call themselves old-fashioned—those people who do not set out on a journey without having girded themselves and who do not enter a room without crossing themselves,[2] and who will not enter into conversation with a man without hav-

[1] St. Petersburg.—Translator.
[2] To the holy pictures.—Translator.

ing preliminarily bidden him "good morning." Akím's mere personal appearance disposed one in his favour; he was tall, rather gaunt, but very well built, even in his mature years; he had a long, comely and regular face, a high, open brow, a thin, straight nose, and small lips. The glance of his prominent brown eyes fairly beamed with gentle cordiality, his thin, soft hair curled in rings about his neck: very little of it remained on the crown of his head. The sound of Akím's voice was very agreeable, although weak; in his youth he had been a capital singer, but his long journeys in the open air, in winter, had impaired his lungs. On the other hand, he spoke very fluently and sweetly. When he laughed, ray-like wrinkles, very pleasant to behold, spread themselves out around his eyes;—such wrinkles are to be seen only in kind people. Akím's movements were generally slow and not devoid of a certain self-confidence and sedate courtesy, as was befitting a man of experience who had seen much in his day.

In fact, Akím would have been all right,—or, as they called him even in the manor-house, whither he was wont to go frequently, as well as unfailingly on Sundays after the morning service in church, Akím Semyónovitch,[1]—would have been all right in every respect had he not had one failing, which has ruined many men on this earth,

[1] See note on p. 273.—Translator.

and in the end ruined him also—a weakness for the female sex. Akím's amorousness went to extremes: his heart was utterly unable to resist a feminine glance; he melted in it, as the first autumnal snow melts in the sun . . . . and he had to pay dearly for his superfluous sensibility.

In the course of the first year after he had settled down upon the highway, Akím was so occupied with the building of his inn, with the installation of his establishment, and with all the worries which are inseparable from all new households, that he positively had not time to think of women, and if any sinful thoughts did enter his head, he promptly expelled them by the perusal of divers holy books, for which he cherished a great respect (he had taught himself to read and write during his first trip as carrier), by chanting the Psalms in an undertone, or by some other pious occupation. Moreover, he was already in his forty-sixth year,—and at that age all passions sensibly calm down and grow cool; and the time for marrying was past. Akím himself had begun to think that that folly, as he expressed it, had broken loose from him . . . but evidently no man can escape his fate.

Akím's former owner, Lizavéta Prókhorovna Kuntze, who had been left a widow by her husband, a staff-officer of German extraction, was herself a native of the town of Mittau, where she had passed the early days of her childhood, and

where she still had a very numerous and needy family, concerning whom, however, she troubled herself very little, especially since one of her brothers, an officer in an army infantry regiment, had unexpectedly presented himself at her house and on the following day had raised such an uproar that he had all but thrashed the mistress of the house herself, and had addressed her, into the bargain, as "*du Lumpenmamsell!*" while on the preceding evening he had himself called her in broken Russian: "sister and benefactress." Lizavéta Prókhorovna hardly ever left the nice little estate acquired by the efforts of her spouse, who had been an architect;[1] she herself managed it, and managed it far from badly. Lizavéta Prókhorovna did not let slip the smallest source of profit; she derived advantage to herself from everything; and in this point, as well as in that of remarkable cleverness in making one kopék serve instead of two, her German nationality betrayed itself; in everything else she had become extremely Russified. She had a considerable number of domestic serfs; in particular, she kept a great many maids, who, however, did not eat the bread of idleness: from morning until night their backs were bowed over work.[2] She was fond of

[1] He had been a staff-officer in the civil service, according to Peter the Great's Table of Ranks. — TRANSLATOR.

[2] These numerous maids, in the old serf days, were employed in making the most exquisite linen, lace, embroidery, and so forth. — TRANSLATOR.

driving out in her carriage with liveried lackeys on the foot-board; she was fond of having people retail gossip to her and play the sycophant; and she herself was a first-rate gossip; she was fond of loading a man down with her favours, and suddenly stunning him with disgrace—in a word, Lizavéta Prókhorovna conducted herself exactly like a nobly-born dame.—She favoured Akím,—he paid her a good round quit-rent with punctuality,—she chatted graciously with him, and even, in jest, invited him to be her guest . . . but it was precisely in the manor-house that calamity awaited Akím.

Among the number of Lizavéta Prókhorovna's maids, there was one young girl of twenty, an orphan, Dunyásha by name. She was not ill-favoured, was well formed and clever; her features, although not regular, were calculated to please; her fresh complexion, her thick, fair hair, her red lips, and a certain dashing, half-sneering, half-challenging expression of face, were all quite charming in their way. Moreover, in spite of her orphaned state, she bore herself staidly, almost haughtily; she was descended from an ancient line of house-serfs; her late father, Aréfy, had been major-domo for thirty years, and her grandfather, Stepán, had served as valet to a gentleman long since deceased, a sergeant of the Guards and a prince. She dressed neatly, and was proud of her hands, which really were ex-

tremely handsome. Dunyásha showed great disdain for all her admirers, listened to their sweet sayings with a conceited smile, and if she answered them, it was chiefly by exclamation only, in the nature of: "Yes! certainly! catch me doing that! the idea!" . . . These exclamations scarcely ever left her tongue. Dunyásha had spent about three years in Moscow, under instruction, where she had acquired those peculiar grimaces and manners which characterise chambermaids who have sojourned in the capitals. People spoke of her as a conceited girl (a great encomium in the mouths of domestics) who, although she had seen much of life, had not lowered her dignity. She sewed far from badly, moreover; but, nevertheless, Lizavéta Prókhorovna had no particular liking for her, thanks to the head maid, Kiríllovna, a woman no longer young, sly, and fond of intrigue. Kiríllovna profited by her great influence over her mistress, and contrived very artfully to keep rivals out of the way.

And it was with this Dunyásha that Akím fell in love! And in a way such as he had never loved before. He beheld her for the first time in church; she had only just returned from Moscow; . . . . then he met her several times in the manor-house; at last he spent a whole evening with her at the overseer's, whither he had been invited to tea, along with other honourable personages. The house-serfs did not look down

on him, although he did not belong to their social class, and wore a beard;[1] but he was a cultured man, could read and write, and—chief thing of all—he had money; moreover, he did not dress in peasant fashion, but wore a long kaftan of black cloth, boots of dressed calf-leather, and a small kerchief round his neck. To tell the truth, some of the house-serfs did make remarks among themselves to the effect, "'t is plain, nevertheless, that he is not one of us," but to his face they almost flattered him. That evening at the overseer's, Dunyásha completed the conquest of Akím's amorous heart, although she positively did not reply by a single word to all his ingratiating speeches, and only now and then cast a sidelong glance at him, as though astonished at seeing that peasant there. All this only inflamed Akím the more. He went off home, thought, and thought, and made up his mind to obtain her hand. . . . So thoroughly had she "bewitched" him. But how shall we describe Dunyásha's wrath and indignation when, five days later, Kiríllovna, affectionately calling her into her room, announced to her that Akím (and evidently he had understood how to set about the business), —that that beard-wearer and peasant Akím, to sit beside whom she had regarded as an insult,—was courting her!

At first Dunyásha flushed hot all over, then she

[1] The beard was regarded as a mark of peasant origin.—Translator.

emitted a forced laugh, then fell to weeping; but Kiríllovna conducted the attack so artfully, so clearly made her feel her position in the house, so cleverly hinted at Akím's decent appearance, wealth, and blind devotion, and, in conclusion, so significantly alluded to the mistress's own wishes, that Dunyásha left the room with hesitation depicted on her face, and encountering Akím, merely gazed intently into his eyes, but did not turn away. The fabulously lavish gifts of this enamoured man dispelled her last doubts. . . . Lizavéta Prókhorovna, to whom Akím, in his joy, had presented a hundred peaches on a large silver salver, gave her consent to his marriage with Dunyásha, and the wedding took place. Akím spared no expense—and the bride, who on the eve of the wedding had sat in the maids' room like one on the verge of expiring, and had done nothing but cry on the very morning of the wedding, while Kiríllovna was dressing her for the ceremony, was speedily comforted. . . . Her mistress gave her her own shawl to wear in church —and that very same day Akím gave her another of the same sort, only almost better.

So then Akím married, and transported his young wife to his inn. . . . They began to live. Dunyásha proved to be a bad housekeeper, a poor helpmeet for her husband. She never looked after anything, she grieved, was bored, unless some passing officer was attentive to her and paid

court to her, as he sat behind the capacious samovár; she frequently absented herself, sometimes going to the town to shop, sometimes to the mistress's manor-house, which lay four versts distant from the inn. In the manor-house she refreshed herself; there people of her own sort surrounded her; the maids envied her smart attire; Kiríllovna treated her to tea; Lizavéta Prókhorovna herself chatted with her. . . . But even these visits did not pass off without bitter emotions for Dunyásha. . . . For instance, being a house-serf, she was not allowed to wear a bonnet, and was obliged to muffle her head up in a kerchief . . . . "like a merchant's wife," as the crafty Kiríllovna said to her. . . . "Like the wife of a petty burgher," thought Dunyásha to herself.

More than once there recurred to Akím's mind the words of his only relative, an aged uncle, an inveterate peasant, a man without family or land: "Well, brother, Akímushka," he had said to him, when he met him in the street, "I have heard that thou 'rt a-courting. . . ."

"Well, yes, I am; what of it?"

"Ekh, Akím, Akím! Thou 'rt no mate for us peasants now, there 's no denying it; neither is she a mate for thee."

"But why is n't she a mate for me?"

"Why, for this reason, at least,"—returned the other, pointing to Akím's beard, which he, to

please his bride, had begun to clip close—he would not consent to shave it off entirely. . . . Akím dropped his eyes; and the old man turned away, wrapped about him the skirts of his sheepskin coat, which was ragged on the shoulders, and went his way, shaking his head.

Yes, more than once did Akím grow pensive, grunt and sigh. . . . But his love for his pretty wife did not diminish; he was proud of her, especially when he compared her, not only with the other peasant women, or with his former wife, whom he had married at the age of sixteen, but with the other maids of the house-serf class: as much as to say: "Just see what sort of a bird we 've captured!" . . . . Her slightest caress afforded him great pleasure. . . "Perhaps," he thought to himself, "she 'll get used to me, she 'll grow accustomed to her new life. . ." Moreover, she conducted herself very well, and no one could say an evil word concerning her.

Several years passed in this manner. Dunyásha really did end by becoming used to her existence. The older Akím grew, the more attached he became to her, and the more he trusted her; her friends, who had married men not of the peasant class, suffered dire need, or were in distress, or had fallen into evil hands. . . . But Akím continued to wax richer and richer. He succeeded in everything—he was lucky; only one thing grieved him: God had not given him any children. Dun-

yásha was already in her twenty-fifth year; every one had come to call her Avdótya Aréfyevna.[1] Nevertheless, she had not become a good housewife.—But she had come to love her home, she attended to the stores of provisions, she looked after the servant-maids. . . . Truth to tell, she did all this in an indifferent way, and did not exercise the proper oversight as to cleanliness and order; but, on the other hand, in the principal room of the inn, alongside the portrait of Akím, hung her portrait, painted in oils and ordered by her from a home-bred artist, the son of the parish deacon.—She was represented in a white gown and a yellow shawl, with six rows of large pearls on her neck, long earrings in her ears, and rings on every finger. . . It was possible to recognise her,—although the painter had depicted her as extremely corpulent and rosy-cheeked, and had painted her eyes black instead of grey, and even a trifle squinting. . . He had not succeeded at all with Akím: the latter had, somehow, turned out very dark—*à la Rembrandt*,—so that a traveller would sometimes step up and stare at it, and merely bellow a bit.

Avdótya had begun to dress with a good deal of carelessness; she would throw a large kerchief over her shoulders, and the gown under it would

[1] Neither field-serfs nor the superior house-serfs were addressed by their patronymic (like the nobility). Dunyásha is the diminutive of Avdóty.—Translator.

fit anyhow; indolence had taken possession of her, that sighing, languid, sleepy indolence to which Russians are but too greatly inclined, especially when their existence is assured. . . . .

Nevertheless, the affairs of Akím and his wife throve very well; they lived in concord, and bore the reputation of being an exemplary married pair. But, like the squirrel which is cleaning its nose at the very moment when the arrow is aimed at it, a man has no foreboding of his own disaster—and suddenly down he crashes, as though on the ice. . . .

One autumn evening a merchant with dry-goods stopped at Akím's inn. He was making his way, by devious roads, with two loaded kibítkas, from Moscow to Khárkoff; he was one of those peddlers whom the wives and daughters of landed proprietors sometimes await with so much impatience. With this peddler, already an elderly man, were travelling two comrades, or, to put it more accurately, two workmen—one pale, thin, hump-backed, the other a stately, handsome young fellow of twenty. They ordered supper, then sat down to drink tea; the peddler invited the landlord and landlady to drink a cup with him—and they did not refuse. A conversation was speedily under way between the two old men (Akím had seen his fifty-sixth birthday); the peddler was making inquiries concerning the neighbouring landed pro-

prietors,—and no one could impart to him all necessary details about them better than could Akím. The hump-backed labourer kept continually going out to look at the carts, and at last took himself off to sleep; Avdótya was left to chat with the other labourer. . . . She sat beside him and talked little, and chiefly listened to what he narrated to her; but evidently his remarks pleased her; her face grew animated, a flush played over her cheeks, and she laughed quite often and readily. The young labourer sat almost motionless, with his curly head bent toward the table; he spoke softly without raising his voice, and without haste; on the other hand his eyes, not large, but audaciously bright and blue, fairly bored into Avdótya; at first she turned away from them, then she began to gaze into his face. The young fellow's face was as fresh and smooth as a Crimean apple; he smiled frequently and drummed his white fingers on his white chin, already covered with sparse, dark down. He expressed himself after the merchant fashion, but with great ease, and with a certain careless self-confidence—and kept staring at her all the while with the same insistent and insolent look. . . . Suddenly he moved a little closer to her, and without changing the expression of his face in the least, he said to her: "Avdótya Aréfyevna, there 's nobody in the world nicer than you; I 'm ready to die for you, I do believe."

Avdótya laughed loudly.

"What 's the matter with thee?"—Akím asked her.

"Why, this man here is telling such absurd things,"—she said, but without any special confusion.

The old peddler grinned.

"He, he, yes, ma'am; that Naúm of mine is such a joker, sir. But you must n't listen to him, ma'am."

"Yes, certainly! as if I would listen to him,"—she replied, and shook her head.

"He, he, of course, ma'am,"—remarked the old man.—"Well, but,"—he added in a drawl,—"good-bye, I 'm much obliged, ma'am, but now 't is time to go to roost, ma'am. . . ." And he rose to his feet.

"And we are much obliged, sir, too, sir,"—said Akím also,—"for the entertainment, that is to say; but now we wish you good night, sir. Rise, Avdótyushka."

Avdótya rose, as though reluctantly, and after her Naúm rose also . . . . and all dispersed.

The landlord and landlady betook themselves to the small, closet-like room which served them as a bedroom. Akím set to snoring instantly. Avdótya could not get to sleep for a long time. . . . At first she lay still, with her face turned to the wall, then she began to toss about on the hot feather-bed, now throwing off, now drawing

up the coverlet . . . . then she fell into a light doze. All of a sudden, a man's loud voice resounded in the yard; it was singing some slow but not mournful song, the words of which could not be distinguished. Avdótya opened her eyes, raised herself on her elbow, and began to listen. . . . The song still went on. . . . It poured forth sonorously on the autumnal air.

Akím raised his head.

"Who 's that singing?"—he inquired.

"I don't know,"—she replied.

"He sings well,"—he added, after a brief pause.—"Well. What a strong voice. I used to sing in my day,"—he continued,—"and I sang well, but my voice is ruined. But that 's a fine singer. It must be that young fellow singing. Naúm is his name, I think."—And he turned over on his other side—drew a deep breath, and fell asleep again.

The voice did not cease for a long time thereafter. . . . Avdótya continued to listen and listen; at last it suddenly broke off short, as it were, then uttered one more wild shout, and slowly died away. Avdótya crossed herself, and laid her head on the pillow. . . . Half an hour elapsed. . . . She raised herself and began softly to get out of bed. . . .

"Whither art thou going, wife?"—Akím asked her through his sleep.

She stopped short.

"To adjust the shrine-lamp," [1]—she answered; "somehow or other I can't sleep."

"Thou hadst better say thy prayers,"—stammered Akím as he fell asleep.

Avdótya went to the shrine-lamp, began to adjust it, and incautiously extinguished it; she returned and lay down in bed. Silence reigned.

Early on the following morning the merchant set out on his way with his companions. Avdótya was sleeping. Akím escorted them for about half a verst; he was obliged to go to the mill. On returning home he found his wife already dressed, and no longer alone; with her was the young fellow of the previous evening, Naúm. They were standing by the table, near the window, and talking together. On catching sight of Akím, Avdótya silently left the room, but Naúm said that he had returned for his master's mittens, which the latter had forgotten on the bench, and he also left the room.

We shall now inform our readers of that which they, no doubt, have already divined without our aid: Avdótya had fallen passionately in love with Naúm. How this could come to pass so quickly, it is difficult to explain; it is all the more difficult, in that, up to that time, she had behaved in an irreproachable manner, notwithstanding numerous opportunities and temptations to betray her

[1] It is customary to have a holy picture, with a shrine-lamp filled with olive-oil burning before it, in bedrooms.—Translator.

marital vows. Later on, when her relations with Naúm became public, many persons in the countryside declared that on that very first evening he had put some magic herb into her tea (people with us still believe firmly in the efficacy of this method), and that this was very readily to be discerned in Avdótya, who, they said, very soon thereafter began to grow thin and bored.

However that may be, at all events Naúm began to be frequently seen at Akím's inn. First, he journeyed past with that same merchant, but three months later he made his appearance alone, with his own wares; then a rumour became current that he had taken up his residence in one of the near-by towns of the county, and from that time forth not a week passed that his stout, painted cart, drawn by a pair of plump horses which he drove himself, did not make its appearance on the highway.

There was no great friendship between him and Akím, but no hostility between them was apparent; Akím paid no great attention to him, and knew nothing about him, except that he was an intelligent young fellow, who had started out boldly. He did not suspect Avdótya's real feelings, and continued to trust her as before.

Thus passed two years more.

Then, one summer day, before dinner, about one o'clock, Lizavéta Prókhorovna, who precisely during the course of those two years had some-

how suddenly grown wrinkled and sallow, despite all sorts of massage, rouge, and powder,—Lizavéta Prókhorovna, with her lap-dog and her folding parasol, strolled forth for a walk in her neat little German park. Lightly rustling her starched gown, she was walking with mincing steps along the sanded path, between two rows of dahlias drawn up in military array, when suddenly she was overtaken by our old acquaintance, Kiríllovna, who respectfully announced that a certain merchant from B*** desired to see her on a very important matter. Kiríllovna, as of yore, enjoyed the mistress's favour (in reality, *she* managed the estate of Madame Kuntze), and some time previously had received permission to wear a white mob-cap, which imparted still more harshness to the thin features of her swarthy face.

"A merchant?"—inquired the lady. "What does he want?"

"I don't know, ma'am, what he wants,"—replied Kiríllovna in a wheedling voice;—"but, apparently, he wishes to purchase something from you, ma'am."

Lizavéta Prókhorovna returned to the drawing-room, seated herself in her customary place, an arm-chair with a canopy, over which ivy meandered prettily, and ordered the merchant from B*** to be summoned.

Naúm entered, made his bow, and halted at the door.

"I have heard that you wish to buy something from me,"—began Lizavéta Prókhorovna, and thought to herself the while:—"What a handsome man this merchant is!"

"Exactly so, ma'am."

"And precisely what is it?"

"Will you not deign to sell your inn?"

"What inn?"

"Why, the one which stands on the highway, not far from here."

"But that inn does not belong to me. That is Akím's inn."

"Why is n't it yours? It stands on your land, ma'am."

"Assuming that the land is mine . . . . bought in my name; still the inn is his."

"Just so, ma'am. So then, won't you sell it to us, ma'am?"

"I am to sell it?"

"Just so, ma'am. And we would pay a good price for it."

Lizavéta Prókhorovna maintained silence for a while.

"Really, this is strange,"—she began again; "what are you saying? But how much would you give?"—she added.—"That is to say, I am not asking for myself, but for Akím."

"Why, with all the buildings and, ma'am, dependencies, ma'am . . . well . . . and, of course, with the land attached to the inn, we would give two thousand rubles, ma'am."

"Two thousand rubles! That 's very little," —replied Lizavéta Prókhorovna.

"That 's the proper price, ma'am."

"But, have you talked it over with Akím?"

"Why should we talk with him, ma'am? The inn is yours, so we have thought best to discuss it with you, ma'am."

"But I have already told you . . . . really, this is astonishing! How is it that you do not understand me?"

"Why don't we understand, ma'am? We do."

Lizavéta Prókhorovna looked at Naúm, Naúm looked at Lizavéta Prókhorovna.

"How is it to be, then, ma'am?"—he began: —"what proposal have you to make on your side, that is to say, ma'am?"

"On my side . . . ." Lizavéta Prókhorovna fidgeted about in her easy-chair.—"In the first place, I tell you that two thousand is not enough, and in the second place . . . ."

"We 'll add a hundred, if you like."

Lizavéta Prókhorovna rose.

"I see that you are talking at cross-purposes, and I have already told you that I cannot and will not sell that inn. I cannot . . . . that is to say, I will not."

Naúm smiled and made no reply for a while.

"Well, as you like, ma'am . . . ." he remarked, with a slight shrug of the shoulders;—"I will

bid you good-day, ma'am."—And he made his bow, and grasped the door-handle.

Lizavéta Prókhorovna turned toward him.

"However, ... " she said, with barely perceptible hesitation,—"you need not go just yet." —She rang the bell; Kiríllovna made her appearance from the boudoir.

"Kiríllovna, order the servants to give the merchant tea.—I will see you later on,"—she added, with a slight inclination of her head.

Naúm bowed again, and left the room in company with Kiríllovna.

Lizavéta Prókhorovna paced up and down the room a couple of times, then rang the bell again. This time a page entered. She ordered him to summon Kiríllovna. In a few moments Kiríllovna entered, with barely a squeak of her new goat's-leather shoes.

"Didst thou hear,"—began Lizavéta Prókhorovna, with a constrained smile,—"what that merchant is proposing to me? Such a queer man, really!"

"No, ma'am, I did n't hear. . . . What is it, ma'am?"—And Kiríllovna slightly narrowed her little, black, Kalmýk eyes.

"He wants to buy Akím's inn from me."

"And what of that, ma'am?"

"Why, seest thou . . . . But how about Akím? I have given it to Akím."

"And, good gracious, my lady, what is it you

are pleased to say? Is n't that inn yours? Are n't we your property, pray? And everything we have,—is n't that also the property of the mistress?"

"Mercy me, what 's that thou 'rt saying, Kiríllovna?"—Lizavéta Prókhorovna got out her batiste handkerchief and nervously blew her nose.—"Akím bought that inn out of his own money."

"Out of his own money? And where did he get that money?—Was n't it through your kindness? And, then, see how long he has enjoyed the use of the land. . . . Surely, all this is through your kindness. And do you think, madam, that even so he will not have more money left? Why, he 's richer than you are, as God is my witness, ma'am!"

"All that is so, of course, but, nevertheless, I cannot. . . . How am I to sell that inn?"

"But why not sell it, ma'am?"—went on Kiríllovna.—"Luckily, a purchaser has turned up. Permit me to inquire, ma'am, how much does he offer you?"

"Over two thousand rubles,"—said Lizavéta Prókhorovna, softly.

"He 'll give more, madam, if he offers two thousand at the first word. And you can settle with Akím afterward; you can reduce his quit-rent, I suppose.—He will still be grateful."

"Of course, his quit-rent must be reduced. But no, Kiríllovna; how can I sell? . . ." And

Lizavéta Prókhorovna paced up and down the room. . . . "No, it is impossible; it is n't right; . . . . no; please say no more to me about it . . . or I shall get angry. . . ."

But in spite of the prohibition of the excited Lizavéta Prókhorovna, Kiríllovna continued to talk, and half an hour later she returned to Naúm, whom she had left in the butler's pantry with the samovár.

"What have you to tell me, my most respected?"—said Naúm, foppishly turning his empty cup upside down on his saucer.

"This is what I have to tell you,"—returned Kiríllovna:—"that you are to go to the mistress; she bids you come."

"I obey, ma'am,"—replied Naúm, rising, and followed Kiríllovna to the drawing-room.

The door closed behind them. . . . When, at last, that door opened again and Naúm backed out of it bowing, the matter was already settled; Akím's inn belonged to him; he had acquired it for two thousand eight hundred rubles in bank-bills.[1] They had decided to complete the deed of sale as promptly as possible, and not to announce the sale until that was accomplished; Lizavéta Prókhorovna had received one hundred rubles as deposit, and two hundred rubles went to Kiríllovna as commission.

[1] The difference in value between paper and silver money was considerable in those days, and the sort of currency is generally specified. —Translator.

"I have got it at a bargain,"—thought Naúm, as he climbed into his cart; "I 'm glad it turned out well."

At that very time, when the bargain which we have described was being effected at the manor-house, Akím was sitting alone on the wall-bench under the window, in his own room, and stroking his beard with an air of displeasure. . . . We have stated above that he did not suspect his wife's fondness for Naúm, although kind persons had, more than once, hinted to him that it was high time for him to listen to reason; of course, he himself was sometimes able to observe that his housewife, for some time past, had become more restive; but then, all the world knows that the female sex is vain and capricious. Even when it really seemed to him that something was wrong, he merely waved it from him; he did not wish, as the saying is, to raise a row; his good-nature had not diminished with the years, and, moreover, indolence was making itself felt. But on that day he was very much out of sorts; on the previous evening he had unexpectedly overheard on the street a conversation between his maid-servant and another woman, one of his neighbours. . . .

The woman had asked his maid-servant why she had not run in to see her on the evening of the holiday. "I was expecting thee," she said.

"Why, I would have come,"—replied the maid-servant,—"but, shameful to say, I caught

the mistress at her capers . . . . bad luck to her!"

"Thou didst catch her . . . ." repeated the peasant-wife in a peculiarly-drawling tone, propping her cheek on her hand.—"And where didst thou catch her, my mother?"

"Why, behind the hemp-patches—the priest's hemp-patches. The mistress, seest thou, had gone out to the hemp-patches to meet that fellow of hers, that Naúm, and I could n't see in the dark, whether because of the moonlight, or what not, the Lord knows, and so I ran right against them."

"Thou didst run against them,"—repeated the peasant-wife again.—"Well, and what was she doing, my mother? Was she standing with him?"

"She was standing, right enough. He was standing and she was standing. She caught sight of me, and says she: 'Whither art thou running to? Take thyself off home.' So I went."

"Thou wentest."—The peasant-wife was silent for a space.—"Well, good-bye, Fetíniushka,"—she said, and went her way.

This conversation had produced an unpleasant effect on Akím. His love for Avdótya had already grown cold, but, nevertheless, the maid-servant's words displeased him. And she had told the truth: as a matter of fact, Avdótya had gone out that evening to meet Naúm, who had waited for her in the dense shadow which fell

upon the road from the tall and motionless hemp-patch. The dew had drenched its every stalk from top to bottom; the scent, powerful to the point of oppressiveness, lay all around. The moon had only just risen, huge and crimson, in the dim and the blackish mist. Naúm had heard Avdótya's hasty footsteps from afar, and had advanced to meet her. She reached him all pale with running; the moon shone directly in her face.

"Well, how now; hast thou brought it?"—he asked her.

"Yes, I have,"—she replied in an irresolute tone:—"but, Naúm Ivánovitch, what . . . ."

"Give it here, if thou hast brought it,"—he interrupted her, stretching out his hand.

She drew from beneath her kerchief on her neck some sort of packet. Naúm instantly grasped it and thrust it into his breast.

"Naúm Ivánitch,"—enunciated Avdótya, slowly, and without taking her eyes from him. . . . "Okh, Naúm Ivánitch, I am ruining my soul for thee. . . ."

At that moment the maid-servant had come upon them.

So, then, Akím was sitting on the wall-bench and stroking his beard with his dissatisfaction. Avdótya kept entering the house and leaving it. He merely followed her with his eyes. At last she entered yet again, and taking a warm wadded jacket from the little room, she was already cross-

ing the threshold; but he could endure it no longer, and began to talk, as though to himself:

"I wonder,"—he began,—"what makes these women-folks always so fidgety? That they should sit still in one spot is something that can't be demanded of them. That 's no affair of theirs. But what they do love is to be running off somewhere or other, morning or evening.—Yes."

Avdótya heard her husband's speech out to the end without changing her attitude; only, at the word "evening," she moved her head a mere trifle, and seemed to become thoughtful.

"Well, Semyónitch,"—she said at last, with irritation,—"'t is well known that when thou beginnest to talk, why. . . ."

She waved her hand and departed, slamming the door behind her. Avdótya did not, in fact, hold Akím's eloquence in high esteem, and it sometimes happened, when he undertook of an evening to argue with the travellers, or began to tell stories, she would yawn quietly or walk out of the room. Akím stared at the closed door. . . . "When thou beginnest to talk," he repeated in an undertone . . . . "that 's exactly it, that I have talked very little with thee. . . . And who art thou? My equal, and, moreover . . . ." And he rose, meditated, and dealt himself a blow on the nape of his neck with his clenched fist. . . .

A few days passed after this day in a decidedly queer manner. Akím kept on staring at

his wife, as though he were preparing to say something to her; and she, on her side, darted suspicious glances at him; moreover, both of them maintained a constrained silence; this silence, however, was generally broken by some snappish remark from Akím about some neglect in the housekeeping, or on the subject of women in general; Avdótya, for the most part, did not answer him with a single word. But, despite all Akím's good-natured weakness, matters would infallibly have come to a decisive explanation between him and Avdótya had it not been for the fact that, at last, an incident occurred, after which all explanations would have been superfluous.

Namely, one morning, Akím and his wife were just preparing to take a light meal after the noon hour (there was not a single traveller in the inn, after the summer labours), when suddenly a small cart rumbled energetically along the road, and drew up at the porch. Akím glanced through the small window, frowned, and dropped his eyes; from the cart, without haste, Naúm alighted. Avdótya did not see him, but when his voice resounded in the anteroom, the spoon trembled weakly in her hand. He ordered the hired man to put his horse in the yard. At last the door flew wide open, and he entered the room.

"Morning,"—he said, and doffed his cap.

"Morning,"—repeated Akím through his teeth.—"Whence has God brought thee?"

"From the neighbourhood,"—returned the other, seating himself on the wall-bench.—"I come from the lady-mistress."

"From the mistress,"—said Akím, still not rising from his seat.—"On business, pray?"

"Yes, on business. Avdótya Aréfyevna, our respects to you."

"Good morning, Naúm,"—she replied.

All remained silent for a space.

"What have you there—some sort of porridge, I suppose?"—began Naúm. . . .

"Yes, porridge,"—retorted Akím, and suddenly paled:—"but it is n't for thee."

Naúm darted a glance of astonishment at Akím.

"Why is n't it for me?"

"Why, just because it is n't for thee."—Akím's eyes began to flash, and he smote the table with his fist.—"There is nothing in my house for thee, dost hear me?"

"What ails thee, Semyónitch, what ails thee? What 's the matter with thee?"

"There 's nothing the matter with me, but I 'm tired of *thee,* Naúm Iványitch, that 's what."—The old man rose to his feet, trembling all over.—"Thou hast taken to haunting my house altogether too much, that 's what."

Naúm also rose to his feet.

"Thou hast gone crazy, brother, I do believe,"—he said with a smile.—"Avdótya Aréfyevna, what 's the matter with him?" . . .

"I tell thee,"—yelled Akím, in a quivering voice,—"get out. Dost hear me? . . . . What hast thou to do with Avdótya Aréfyevna? . . . . Begone, I tell thee! Dost hear me?"

"What 's that thou art saying to me?"—inquired Naúm, significantly.

"Take thyself away from here; that 's what I 'm saying to thee. There is God, and there is the threshold . . . . dost understand? or 't will be the worse for thee!"

Naúm strode forward.

"Good heavens, don't fight, my dear little doves,"—stammered Avdótya, who until then had remained sitting motionless at the table. . . .

Naúm cast a glance at her.

"Don't worry, Avdótya Aréfyevna, why should we fight! Ek-sta, brother,"—he continued, addressing Akím:—"thou hast deafened me with thy yells. Really. What an insolent fellow thou art! Did any one ever hear of such a thing as expelling a man from another man's house,"—added Naúm, with deliberate enunciation:—"and the master of the house, into the bargain?"

"What dost thou mean by another man's house?"—muttered Akím.—"What master of the house?"

"Why, me, for example."

And Naúm screwed up his eyes, and displayed his white teeth in a grin.

"Thee, forsooth? Ain't I the master of the house?"

"What a stupid fellow thou art, my good fellow.—I am the master of the house, I tell thee."

Akím opened his eyes to their widest.

"What nonsense is that thou art prating, as though thou hadst eaten mad-wort?"—he said at last.—"How the devil dost thou come to be the master?"

"Well, what 's the use of talking to thee,"—shouted Naúm, impatiently.—"Dost see this document,"—he added, jerking out of his pocket a sheet of stamped paper folded in four:—"dost see it? This is a deed of sale, understand, a deed of sale for thy land, and for the inn; I have bought them from the landed proprietress, Lizavéta Prókhorovna. We signed the deed of sale yesterday, in B***—consequently, I am the master here, not thou. Gather up thy duds this very day,"—he added, putting the paper back in his pocket;—"and let there be not a sign of thee here by to-morrow; hearest thou?"

Akím stood as though he had been struck by lightning.

"Brigand!"—he moaned at last;—"the brigand. . . Hey, Fédka, Mítka, wife, wife, seize him, seize him—hold him!"

He had completely lost his wits.

"Look out, look out,"—ejaculated Naúm,

menacingly:—"look out, old man, don't play the fool. . . ."

"But beat him, beat him, wife!"—Akím kept repeating in a tearful voice, vainly and impotently trying to leave his place.—"The soul-ruiner, the brigand. . . She was n't enough for thee . . . thou wantest to take my house away from me also, and everything. . . . But no, stay . . . . that cannot be. . . . I will go myself. I will tell her myself . . . how . . . . but why sell? . . . Stop . . . . stop. . . ."

And he rushed hatless into the street.

"Whither art thou running, Akím Iványitch, whither art thou running, dear little father?"—cried the maid-servant Fetínya, who collided with him in the doorway.

"To the mistress! let me go! To the mistress. . . ." roared Akím, and catching sight of Naúm's cart, which the servants had not yet had time to put in the stable-yard, he sprang into it, seized the reins, and lashing the horse with all his might, he set off at a gallop to the lady's manor-house.

"Dear little mother, Lizavéta Prókhorovna,"—he kept repeating to himself all the way,—"why such unkindness? I have shown zeal, methinks!"

And, in the meantime, he kept on beating the horse. Those who met him drew aside and gazed long after him.

In a quarter of an hour Akím had reached Lizavéta Prókhorovna's manor, had dashed up to the porch, had leaped from the cart, and burst straight into the anteroom.

"What dost thou want?"—muttered the startled footman, who was sweetly dozing on the locker.

"The mistress—I must see the mistress," vociferated Akím loudly.

The lackey was astounded.

"Has anything happened?"—he began.

"Nothing has happened, but I must see the mistress."

"What, what?"—said the lackey, more and more astounded, straightening himself up.

Akím recovered himself. . . It was as though he had been drenched with cold water.

"Announce to the mistress, Piótr Evgráfitch,"—he said, with a low obeisance,—"that Akím wishes to see her. . . ."

"Good, . . . I will go . . . . I will announce thee . . . . but evidently thou art drunk. Wait,"—grumbled the lackey, and withdrew.

Akím dropped his eyes and became confused, as it were. . . . His boldness had swiftly abandoned him from the very moment he had entered the anteroom.

Lizavéta Prókhorovna was also disconcerted when Akím's arrival was announced to her. She

immediately gave orders that Kiríllovna should be called to her in her boudoir.

"I cannot receive him,"—she said hurriedly, as soon as the latter made her appearance;—"I cannot possibly do it. What can I say to him? Did n't I tell thee that he would be sure to come and would complain?"—she added, with vexation and agitation;—"I said so. . . ."

"Why should you receive him, ma'am?"—calmly replied Kiríllovna;—"that is not necessary, ma'am. Why should you disturb yourself, pray?"

"But what am I to do?"

"If you will permit me, I will talk with him."

Lizavéta Prókhorovna raised her head.

"Pray, do me the favour, Kiríllovna. Do talk with him. Do thou tell him . . . . there—well, that I found it necessary . . . and, moreover, that I will make it up to him . . . . well, there now, thou knowest what to say. Pray, do, Kiríllovna."

"Please do not fret, madam,"—returned Kiríllovna, and withdrew, with squeaking shoes.

A quarter of an hour had not elapsed when their squeaking became audible again, and Kiríllovna entered the boudoir with the same composed expression on her face, with the same crafty intelligence in her eyes.

"Well,"—inquired her mistress,—"how about Akím?"

"'T is all right, ma'am. He says, ma'am, that everything is in your power, he submits himself wholly to the will of your Graciousness, and if only you keep well and prosperous, he will forever be satisfied with his lot."

"And he made no complaint?"

"None whatever, ma'am. What was there for him to complain about?"

"But why did he come, then?"—said Lizavéta Prókhorovna, not without some surprise.

"Why, he came to ask, ma'am, until he receives compensation, whether you will not be so gracious as to remit his quit-rent for the coming year, that is to say . . . ."

"Of course I will! I will remit it,"—put in Lizavéta Prókhorovna, with vivacity;—"of course. And, tell him, in general terms, that I will reward him. Well, I thank thee, Kiríllovna. And he is a good peasant, I see. Stay,"—she added:—"here, give him this from me."—And she took out of her work-table a three-ruble bill.—"Here, take this and give it to him."

"I obey, ma'am,"—replied Kiríllovna, and coolly returning to her own room, she coolly locked up the bank-bill in an iron-bound casket which stood by the head of her bed; she kept in it all her ready money, and the amount was not small.

Kiríllovna by her report had soothed her lady, but the conversation between her and Akím had,

in reality, not been precisely as she represented it, but to wit: she had ordered him to be summoned to her in the maids' hall. At first he refused to go to her, declaring that he did not wish to see Kiríllovna, but Lizavéta Prókhorovna herself; nevertheless, at last, he submitted, and wended his way through the back door to Kiríllovna. He found her alone. On entering the room he came to a halt at once, leaned against the wall near the door, and made an effort to speak . . . . and could not.

Kiríllovna stared intently at him.

"Do you wish to see the mistress, Akím Semyónitch?"—she began.

He merely nodded his head.

"That is impossible, Akím Semyónitch. And what is the use? What is done can't be undone, and you will only worry her. She cannot receive you now, Akím Semyónitch."

"She cannot,"—he repeated, and paused for a space.—"Then how is it to be,"—he said at last;—"that means that I must lose my house?"

"Hearken, Akím Semyónitch. I know that you have always been a reasonable man. This is the mistress's will. And it cannot be changed. You cannot alter it. There is nothing for you and me to discuss, for it will lead to no result. Is n't that so?"

Akím put his hands behind his back.

"But you had better consider,"—went on Ki-

ríllovna,—" whether you ought not to ask the mistress to remit your quit-rent, had n't you? . . ."

" That means that I must lose the house,"—repeated Akím, in the same tone as before.

" Akím Semyónitch, I 've told you already 't is impossible to change that. You know that yourself even better than I do."

" Yes. But tell me, at any rate, how much my inn sold for? "

" I don't know that, Akím Semyónitch; I can't tell you. . . . But why do you stand there? "—she added.—" Sit down. . . ."

" I 'll stand as I am, ma'am. I 'm a peasant. I thank you humbly."

" Why do you say that you are a peasant, Akím Semyónitch? You are the same as a merchant; you cannot be compared even with the house-serfs; why do you say that? Don't decry yourself without cause. Won't you have some tea? "

" No, thanks; I don't require it. And so my dear little house has become your property,"—he added, quitting the wall.—" Thanks for that, also. I will bid you good day, my little madam."

Thereupon he wheeled round, and left the room. Kiríllovna smoothed down her apron, and betook herself to her mistress.

" So it appears that I actually have become a merchant,"—said Akím to himself, as he paused in thought before the gate.—" A fine merchant! "

He waved his hand and laughed a bitter laugh. —" Well, I might as well go home! "

And utterly oblivious of Naúm's horse, which he had driven thither, he trudged along the road to the inn. Before he had covered the first verst, he heard the rattle of a cart alongside of him.

" Akím, Akím Semyónitch! "—some one called to him.

He raised his eyes and beheld his acquaintance, the chanter of the parish church, Efrém, nicknamed " The Mole," a small, round-shouldered man, with a sharp-pointed little nose, and purblind eyes. He was sitting in a rickety little cart on a whisp of straw, with his breast leaning on the driver's seat.

" Art thou on thy way home, pray? "—he asked Akím.

Akím halted.

" Yes."

" I 'll drive you there,—shall I? "

" All right, do."

Efrém moved aside, and Akím clambered into the cart. Efrém, who was jolly with drink, it appeared, set to lashing his miserable little nag with the ends of his rope reins; the horse advanced at a weary trot, incessantly twitching her unbridled muzzle.

They drove about a verst, without saying one word to each other. Akím sat with bowed head,

and Efrém merely mumbled something to himself, now stimulating the horse to greater speed, now reining it in.

"Whither hast thou been without a hat, Semyónitch?"—he suddenly asked Akím, and, without waiting for a reply, he went on in an undertone:—"thou hast left it in a nice little dram-shop, that 's what. Thou 'rt a tippler; I know thee, and I love thee because thou art a tippler—'t was high time, long ago, to place thee under ecclesiastical censure, God is my witness; because 't is a bad business. . . . Hurrah!"—he shouted suddenly, at the top of his lungs,—"hurrah! hurrah!"

"Halt! halt!"—rang out a woman's voice close at hand.—"Halt!"

Akím glanced round. Across the fields, in the direction of the cart, a woman was running, so pale and dishevelled that he did not recognise her at first.

"Halt, halt!"—she moaned again, panting and waving her arms.

Akím shuddered: it was his wife.

He seized the reins.

"And why should we halt?"—muttered Efrém;—"why should we halt for a female? Get u-uup!"

But Akím jerked the horse abruptly on its haunches.

At that moment Avdótya reached the road, and fairly tumbled headlong, face downward, in the dust.

"Dear little father, Akím Semyónitch,"—she shrieked;—"he has actually turned me out of doors!"

Akím gazed at her, and did not move, but merely drew the reins still more taut.

"Hurrah!"—cried Efrém again.

"And so he has turned thee out?"—said Akím.

"He has, dear little father, my dear little dove," replied Avdótya, sobbing.—"He has turned me out, dear little father. 'The house is mine now,' says he; 'so get out,' says he."

"Capital, that 's just fine . . . capital!"—remarked Efrém.

"And thou wert counting on remaining, I suppose?"—said Akím, bitterly, as he continued to sit in the cart.

"Remain, indeed! Yes, dear little father,"—put in Avdótya, who had raised herself on her knees, and again beat her brow against the ground;—"for thou dost not know, seest thou, I. . . . Kill me, Akím Semyónitch, kill me here, on the spot. . . ."

"Why should I beat thee, Aréfyevna!"—replied Akím, dejectedly:—"thou hast vanquished thyself! what more is there to say?"

"But what wilt thou think, Akím Semyó-

nitch. . . . Why, the money . . . . was thy money. . . . It is gone, thy money. . . For I took it, accursed that I am, I got it from the cellar. . . . . I gave it all to that man, that villain, that Naúm, accursed creature that I am! . . . And why didst thou tell me where thou hadst hidden thy money, wretched being that I am! . . . . For he bought the inn with thy money . . . . the villain. . . ."

Sobs drowned her voice.

Akím clutched his head with both hands.

"What!"—he screamed at last;—"and so all the money too . . . the money, and the inn, thou hast. . . . Ah! thou hast got it from the cellar . . . . from the cellar. . . . Yes, I will kill thee, thou brood of vipers! . . ."

And he leaped from the cart. . . .

"Semyónitch, Semyónitch, don't beat her, don't fight,"—stammered Efrém, whose intoxication began to dissipate at such an unexpected event.

"Yes, dear little father, kill me, kill me, dear little father, kill me, the vile creature: beat away, don't heed him!"—shrieked Avdótya, as she writhed convulsively at Akím's feet.

He stood awhile and stared at her, then retreated a few paces, and sat down on the grass, by the roadside.

A brief silence ensued. Avdótya turned her head in his direction.

"Semyónitch, hey, Semyónitch!"—began Efrém, half-rising in the cart;—"have done with that—that will do . . . for thou canst not repair the calamity. Phew, what an affair!"—he continued, as though to himself;—"what a damned bad woman. . . Do thou go to him,"—he added, bending over the cart-rail toward Avdótya;—"canst not see that he has gone crazy?"

Avdótya rose, approached Akím and again fell at his feet.

"Dear little father,"—she began in a faint voice.

Akím rose and went back to the cart. She clutched the skirt of his kaftan.

"Get away!"—he shouted fiercely, repulsing her.

"Whither art thou going?"—Efrém asked him, perceiving that he was taking his seat again beside him.

"Why, thou didst offer to drive me to the inn,"—said Akím:—"so drive me to thy house. . . . I have none any more, seest thou. They have bought it from me, you know."

"Well, all right, let 's go to my house. And how about her?"

Akím made no answer.

"And me, me,"—chimed in Avdótya, weeping;—"to whose care dost thou leave me . . . . whither am I to go?"

"Go to him,"—returned Akím, without turn-

ing round:—"to the man to whom thou didst carry my money. . . Drive on, Efrém!"

Efrém whipped up the horse, the cart rolled off, and Avdótya set up a shrill scream. . . .

Efrém lived a verst from Akím's inn, in a tiny cot in the priest's glebe, disposed around the solitary five-domed church, which had recently been erected by the heirs of a wealthy merchant, in conformity with his testamentary dispositions. Efrém did not speak to Akím all the way, and only shook his head from time to time, uttering words of the following nature: "Akh, thou!" and, "Ekh, thou!" Akím sat motionless, slightly turned away from Efrém. At last they arrived. Efrém sprang out first from the cart. A little girl of six years in a little chemise girt low ran out to meet him, and screamed:

"Daddy! daddy!"

"And where is thy mother?"—Efrém asked her.

"She 's asleep in the kennel."

"Well, let her sleep. Akím Semyónitch, won't you please come into the house?"

(It must be observed that Efrém addressed him as "thou" only when he was intoxicated. Far more important persons than he addressed Akím as "you.")

Akím entered the chanter's cottage.

"Pray, come hither to the bench,"—said Efrém.—"Run along, you little rogues,"—he

shouted at three other brats who, along with two emaciated cats bespattered with ashes, suddenly made their appearance from various corners of the room.—"Run away! Scat! Here, Akím Semyónitch, come here,"—he went on, as he seated his guest:—"and would n't you like something?"

"What shall I say to thee, Efrém?"—articulated Akím at last.—"Could n't I have some liquor?"

Efrém gave a start.

"Liquor? Certainly. I have none in the house,—liquor, that is to say,—but here, I 'll run at once to Father Feódor. He always has some on hand. . . . . I 'll be back in a jiffy. . . ."

And he snatched up his large-eared cap.

"And bring as much as possible; I 'll pay for it,"—shouted Akím after him.—"I still have money enough for that."

"In a jiffy," . . . repeated Efrém once more, as he disappeared through the door. He really did return very speedily with two quart bottles under his arm, one of which was already uncorked, placed them on the table, got out two small green glasses, the heel of a loaf, and salt.

"That 's what I love,"—he kept repeating, as he seated himself opposite Akím.—"What 's the use of grieving?"—he filled the glasses for both . . . . and set to babbling. . . . Avdótya's behaviour had stunned him.—"'T is an astonishing

affair, truly,"—said he:—"how did it come about? He must have bewitched her to himself by magic . . . . hey? That 's what it means, that a woman should be strictly watched! She ought to have had a tight hand kept over her. And yet, it would n't be a bad thing for you to go home; for you must have a lot of property left there, I think."—And to many more speeches of the same sort did Efrém give utterance; when he was drinking he did not like to hold his tongue.

An hour later, this is what took place in Efrém's house. Akím, who had not replied by a single word, during the entire course of the drinking-bout, to the interrogations and comments of his loquacious host, and had merely drained glass after glass, was fast asleep on the oven, all red in the face—in a heavy, anguished slumber; the youngsters were wondering at him, while Efrém . . . . Alas! Efrém was asleep also, but only in a very cramped and cold lumber-room, in which he had been locked up by his wife, a woman of extremely masculine and robust build. He had gone to her in the stable, and had begun to threaten her, if she repeated something or other, but so incoherently and unintelligibly did he express himself that she instantly divined what the trouble was, grasped him by the collar, and led him to the proper place. However, he slept very well and even comfortably in the lumber-room. Habit!

Kiríllovna had not reported her conversation with Akím very accurately to Lizavéta Prókhorovna . . . . and the same may be said concerning Avdótya. Naúm had not turned her out of the house, although she had told Akím that he had done so; he had not the right to expel her. . . . He was bound to give the former proprietors time to move out. Explanations of quite another sort had taken place between him and Avdótya. When Akím had rushed into the street, shouting that he would go to the mistress, Avdótya had turned to Naúm, had stared at him with all her eyes, and clasped her hands.

"O Lord!"—she began;—"Naúm Iványitch, what is the meaning of this? Have you bought our inn?"

"What if I have, ma'am?"—he retorted.—"I have bought it, ma'am."

Avdótya said nothing for a while, then suddenly took fright.

"So that is what you wanted the money for?"

"Precisely as you are pleased to put it, ma'am. Ehe, I do believe that measly little husband of yours has driven off with my horse,"—he added, as the rumble of wheels reached his ear.—"What a fine dashing fellow he is!"

"Why, but this is robbery, nothing else!"—shrieked Avdótya.—"For the money is ours, my husband's, and the inn is ours . . . ."

"No, ma'am, Avdótya Aréfyevna,"—Naúm

interrupted her:—"the inn was n't yours, and what 's the use of saying so; the inn stood on the lady-mistress's land, so it belonged to her also; and the money really was yours, only you were so kind, I may put it, as to contribute it to me, ma'am; and I shall remain grateful to you, and shall even, if the occasion arises, return it to you,—if I should see my way to it; only, it is n't right that I should strip myself bare. Just judge for yourself if that is n't so."

Naúm said all this very calmly, and even with a slight smile.

"Good heavens!"—screamed Avdótya;—"but what 's the meaning of this? What is it? But how am I to show myself in my husband's sight after this? Thou villain!"—she added, gazing with hatred at Naúm's young, fresh face;—"have n't I ruined my soul for thee, have n't I become a thief for thy sake, hast not thou turned us out of doors, thou abominable villain? ! After this there is nothing left for me but to put a noose about my neck, villain, deceiver, thou destroyer of me. . . ."

And she wept in torrents. . . .

"Pray, don't worry, Avdótya Aréfyevna,"—said Naúm;—"I 'll tell you one thing; a fellow must look out for number one; moreover, that's what the pike is in the sea for, Avdótya Aréfyevna—to keep the carp from getting drowsy."

"Where are we to go now, what is to be-

come of us?"—stammered Avdótya through her tears.

"That 's more than I can tell, ma'am."

"But I 'll cut thy throat, thou villain; I will, I will! . . ."

"No, you won't do that, Avdótya Aréfyevna; what 's the use of saying that? But I see that it will be better for me to go away from here for a while, or you will be much upset. . . . I will bid you good day, ma'am, and to-morrow I shall return without fail. . . . And you will be so good as to permit me to send my hired men to you to-day,"—he added, while Avdótya continued to repeat, through her tears, that she would cut his throat and her own also.

"And yonder they come, by the way,"—he remarked, looking out of the window. "Otherwise, some catastrophe might happen, which God forbid. . . . Matters will be more tranquil so. Do me the favour to get your belongings together to-day, ma'am, while they will stand guard over you and help you, if you like. I bid you good day, ma'am."

He bowed, left the room and called his men to him. . . .

Avdótya sank down on the wall-bench, then laid herself breast down on the table, and began to wring her hands, then suddenly sprang to her feet, and ran after her husband. . . . We have described their meeting.

When Akím drove away from her in company with Efrém, leaving her alone in the fields, she first wept for a long time, without stirring from the spot. Having wept her fill, she directed her course to the mistress's manor. It was a bitter thing for her to enter the house, and still more bitter to show herself in the maids'-hall. All the maids flew to greet her with sympathy and expressions of regret. At the sight of them, Avdótya could not restrain her tears; they fairly gushed forth from her red and swollen eyes. Completely unnerved, she dropped down on the first chair she came to. They ran for Kiríllovna. Kiríllovna came, treated her very affectionately, but would not admit her to see the mistress, any more than she had admitted Akím. Avdótya herself did not insist very strongly on seeing Lizavéta Prókhorovna; she had come to the manor-house solely because she positively did not know where to lay her head.

Kiríllovna ordered the samovár to be prepared. For a long time Avdótya refused to drink tea, but yielded, at last, to the entreaties and persuasions of all the maids, and after the first cup drank four more. When Kiríllovna perceived that her visitor was somewhat pacified, and only shuddered from time to time, sobbing faintly, she asked her whither they intended to remove, and what they wished to do with their things. This question set Avdótya to crying again, and she be-

gan to asseverate that she wanted nothing more, except to die; but Kiríllovna, being a woman of brains, immediately stopped her and advised her to set about transferring her things that very day, without useless waste of time, to Akím's former cottage in the village, where dwelt his uncle, that same old man who had tried to dissuade him from marrying; she announced that, with the mistress's permission, they would be furnished with transportation, and the aid of people and horses; " and as for you, my dearest,"—added Kiríllovna, compressing her cat-like lips in a sour smile,—" there will always be a place for you in our house, and it will be very agreeable to us if you will be our guest until you recover yourself and get settled in your house. The principal thing is—you must not get downcast. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, and He will give again: everything depends on His will. Lizavéta Prókhorovna, of course, was obliged to sell your house, according to her calculations, but she will not forget you, and will reward you; she bade me say so to Akím Semyónitch. . . Where is he now?"

Avdótya replied that, on meeting her, he had grossly insulted her, and had driven off to Chanter Efrém's.

"To that creature's!"—replied Kiríllovna, significantly.—" Well, I understand that it is painful for him now, and I don't believe you can

hunt him up to-day. What is to be done? We must take measures, Maláshka,"—she added, turning to one of the chambermaids. "Just ask Nikanór Ílitch to step here; I will have a talk with him."

Nikanór Ílitch, a man of very paltry appearance, who served somewhat in the capacity of overseer, immediately presented himself, obsequiously listened to everything which Kiríllovna said to him,—remarked: "It shall be executed," left the room and issued his orders. Avdótya was furnished with three carts and three peasants; these were voluntarily joined by a fourth, who said of himself that he would be "more intelligent than they," and she set off in company with them for the inn, where she found her former hired men and her maid-servant, Fetínya, in great terror and excitement. . . .

Naúm's recruits, three extremely robust young fellows, had arrived in the morning, and had gone nowhere since, but had maintained a very zealous guard over the inn, according to Naúm's promise —so zealous, that one cart speedily proved to be devoid of tires. . .

Bitter, very bitter was it for poor Avdótya to pack up her things. Despite the assistance of the "intelligent" man, who, by the way, knew how to do nothing but stalk about with a staff in his hand, and watch the others, and spit to one side,

she did not succeed in moving out that day, and remained to spend the night in the inn, having first requested Fetínya not to leave her room; but it was not until daybreak that she fell into a feverish doze, and the tears streamed down her cheeks even in her sleep.

In the meantime, Efrém awoke earlier than was his wont in his lumber-room, and began to thump and demand his release. At first his wife would not let him out, declaring to him through the door that he had not yet had enough sleep; but he excited her curiosity by promising to tell her about the remarkable thing which had happened to Akím; she undid the latch.—Efrém imparted to her everything he knew, and wound up with the question: "Was he awake or not?"

"Why, the Lord knows,"—replied his wife; —"go and see for thyself; he has not climbed down from the oven yet.—You both got pretty drunk last night; thou shouldst just see thyself —thy face has no semblance of a face; 't is like some sort of ladle; and what a lot of hay has got into thy hair!"

"Never mind if it has,"—returned Efrém,— and passing his hand over his head, he entered the house.—Akím was no longer asleep; he was sitting on the oven with his legs dangling; his face also was very strange and discomposed. It appeared all the more distorted because Akím was not in the habit of drinking heavily.

"Well, how now, Akím Semyónitch, how have you slept?"—began Efrém. . . .

Akím looked at him with a turbid gaze.

"Come, brother Efrém,"—he said hoarsely,—"can't we do it again—thou knowest what?"

Efrém darted a swift glance at Akím . . . . at that moment he felt a sort of thrill; that is the kind of sensation a sportsman experiences when standing on the skirt of the woods, at the sudden yelping of his hound in the forest, from which, apparently, all the wild beasts have already fled.

"What—more?"—he asked at last.

"Yes; more."

"My wife will see,"—thought Efrém,—"and I don't believe she will allow it."—"All right, it can be done,"—he said aloud;—"have patience."—He went out and, thanks to artfully conceived measures, succeeded in smuggling in a huge bottle unperceived beneath the skirt of his coat. . . .

Akím seized the bottle . . . But Efrém did not start to drink with him as on the preceding evening—he was afraid of his wife, and,—having told Akím that he would go and see how things were progressing at his house, and how his belongings were being packed, and whether he were not being robbed,—he immediately set off for the inn astride of his unfed little nag,—not forgetting himself, however, if we may take into consideration his projecting bosom.

Soon after his departure, Akím fell asleep again, and lay like one dead on the oven. . . . He did not even wake up—at all events, he showed no signs of being awake—when Efrém, returning four hours later, began to shove him and try to rouse him, and whisper over him some extremely indistinct words to the effect that everything was gone and transported and the holy pictures were gone too, and everything was already over—and that every one was hunting for him, but that he, Efrém, had taken due measures, and had prohibited . . . and so forth. But he did not whisper long. His wife led him off to the lumber-room again, and herself lay down in the house, on the platform over the oven, in great indignation at her husband and at the guest, thanks to whom her husband had got drunk. . . . But when, on awakening very early, according to her wont, she cast a glance at the oven, Akím was no longer on it. . . . The cocks had not yet crowed for the second time, and the night was still so dark that the sky was barely turning grey directly overhead, and at the rim was still completely drowned in vapour, when Akím emerged from the gate of the chanter's house. His face was pale, but he darted a keen glance around him, and his gait did not betray the drunkard. . . . He walked in the direction of his former dwelling—the inn, which had already definitively become the property of its new owner, Naúm.

Naúm was not sleeping either, at the time when Akím stealthily quitted Efrém's house. He was not asleep; he was lying completely dressed on the wall-bench, with his sheepskin coat rolled up under his head. It was not that his conscience was tormenting him—no! he had been present with astounding cold-bloodedness, from the morning on, at the packing and transportation of Akím's household goods, and had more than once spoken to Avdótya, who was downcast to such a degree that she did not even upbraid him. . . . His conscience was at ease, but divers surmises and calculations occupied his mind. He did not know whether he was going to make a success of his new career; up to that time, he had never kept an inn—and, generally speaking, had never even had a nook of his own; and so he could not get to sleep.—"This little affair has been begun well," —he thought;—"what will the future be?" . . . When the last cart-load of Akím's effects had set off just before night-fall (Avdótya had followed it weeping), he had inspected the entire inn, all the stables, cellars, and barns; he had crawled up into the attic, had repeatedly ordered his labourers to maintain a strict watch, and, when he was left alone after supper, he had not been able to get to sleep. It so happened that on that day none of the travellers stopped to pass the night; and this pleased him greatly. "I must buy a dog without fail to-morrow,—the worst-tempered

dog I can get, from the miller; for they have carried off theirs,"—he said to himself, as he tossed from side to side, and, all of a sudden, he raised his head hastily. . . . It seemed to him as though some one had stolen past under the window. . . He listened. . . Not a sound. Only a grasshopper shrilled behind the oven, from time to time, and a mouse was gnawing somewhere, and his own breath was audible. All was still in the empty room, dimly illuminated by the yellow rays of a tiny glass shrine-lamp, which he had found time to suspend and light in front of a small holy picture in the corner. . . He lowered his head; and now again he seemed to hear the gate squeaking . . . . then the wattled hedge crackled faintly. . . . He could not endure it, leaped to his feet, opened the door into the next room, and called in a low tone: "Feódor, hey, Feódor!"—No one answered him. . . . He went out into the anteroom and nearly fell prone, as he stumbled over Feódor, who was sprawling on the floor. The labourer stirred, growling in his sleep; he shook him.

"Who 's there? What 's wanted?"—Feódor was beginning. . . .

"What art thou yelling for? Hold thy tongue!"—articulated Naúm in a whisper.—"The idea of your sleeping, you damned brutes! Hast thou not heard anything?"

"No,"—replied the man. . . . "Why?"

"And where are the others sleeping?"

"The others are sleeping where they were ordered to. . . . But has anything happened? . . ."

"Silence!—Follow me."

Naúm softly opened the door leading from the anteroom into the yard. . . . Out of doors everything was very dark; . . . it was possible to make out the sheds with their pillars only because they stood out still more densely black in the midst of the black mist. . . .

"Sha'n't I light a lantern?"—said Feódor in a low voice.

But Naúm waved his hand and held his breath. . . . At first he could hear nothing except those nocturnal sounds which one can almost always hear in inhabited places: a horse was munching oats, a pig grunted once faintly in its sleep, a man was snoring somewhere; but suddenly there reached his ear a suspicious sort of noise, proceeding from the extreme end of the yard, close to the fence. . . .

It seemed as though some one was moving about, and breathing or blowing. . . . Naúm looked over Feódor's shoulder, and, cautiously descending the steps, walked in the direction of the sound. . . . A couple of times he halted, and listened, then continued to creep stealthily onward. . . . Suddenly he gave a start. . . . Ten paces from him, in the dense gloom, a point of light suddenly glimmered brightly: it was a red-

hot coal, and beside the coal there showed itself for a brief instant the front part of some one's face, with lips puffed out. . . . Swiftly and silently Naúm darted at the light, as a cat darts at a mouse. . . . Hastily rising from the ground, a long body rushed to meet him, and almost knocked him from his feet, almost slipped through his hands, but he clung to it with all his might. . . .

"Feódor! Andréi! Petrúshka!"—he shouted, at the top of his lungs;—"come here quick, quick! I 've caught a thief, an incendiary!"

The man whom he had captured struggled and resisted . . . . but Naúm did not release him. . . . Feódor immediately darted to his assistance.

"A lantern, quick, a lantern! Run for a lantern! wake the others, be quick!"—Naúm shouted to him,—"and I 'll manage him alone meanwhile —I 'll sit on him. . . Be quick! and fetch a belt to bind him with!"

Feódor flew to the cottage. . . . The man whom Naúm was holding suddenly ceased his resistance. . . .

"So, evidently, 't is not enough for thee to have taken my wife and my money, and my house, but thou art bent on destroying me also,"—he said in a dull tone. . . .

Naúm recognised Akím's voice.

"So 't is thou, dear little dove,"—said he;—"good, just wait a bit!"

"Let me go,"—said Akím.—"Art not thou satisfied?"

"See here, to-morrow I 'll show you in the presence of the judge how satisfied I am. . . ." And Naúm tightened his hold on Akím. . . .

The labourers ran up with two lanterns and some ropes. . . . "Bind him!"—ordered Naúm, sharply. . . . The labourers seized Akím, lifted him up, and bound his hands behind him. . . . One of them was beginning to swear, but on recognising the former landlord of the inn, he held his peace, and merely exchanged glances with the others.

"Just see there, see there, now,"—Naúm kept repeating the while, as he passed the lantern along the ground;—"yonder, there are coals in a pot; just look, he has brought a whole firebrand in the pot—we must find out where he got that pot . . . and here, he has broken twigs. . . ." And Naúm assiduously stamped out the fire with his foot.—"Search him, Feódor!"—he added, "and see whether he has anything more about him."

Feódor searched and felt Akím, who stood motionless with his head drooping on his breast, like a dead man.—"There is—here 's a knife,"—said Feódor, drawing an old kitchen-knife from Akím's breast.

"Ehe, my dear fellow, so that 's what thou hadst in mind!"—exclaimed Naúm.—"You are

witnesses, my lads—see there, he intended to cut my throat, to burn up my house. . . . Lock him up in the cellar until morning; he can't get out of there. . . . I will stand watch all night myself, and to-morrow at dawn we will take him to the chief of police . . . . and you are witnesses, do you hear. . . ."

They thrust Akím into the cellar, and slammed the door behind him. . . . Naúm stationed two of the labourers there, and did not lie down to sleep himself.

In the meantime, Efrém's wife, having convinced herself that her unbidden guest had taken himself off, was on the point of beginning her cooking, although it was hardly daylight out of doors as yet. She squatted down by the oven to get some coals, and saw that some one had already raked out the live embers thence; then she bethought herself of her knife—and did not find it; in conclusion, one of her four pots was missing. Efrém's wife bore the reputation of being anything but a stupid woman—and with good reason. She stood for a while in thought, then went to the lumber-room to her husband. It was not easy to arouse him fully—and still more difficult was it to make him understand why he had been awakened. . . To everything which his wife said, Chanter Efrém made one and the same reply:

"He 's gone,—well, God be with him . . .

but what business is that of mine? He has carried off a knife and a pot—well, God be with him—but what business is that of mine?"

But, at last, he rose, and after listening intently to his wife, he decided that it was a bad business, and that it could not be left as it now stood.

"Yes,"—the chanter's wife insisted,—"'t is a bad business; I do believe he 'll do mischief out of desperation. . . . I noticed last night that he was not asleep as he lay there on the oven; it would n't be a bad idea for thee, Efrém Alexándritch, to find out whether . . . ."

"See here, Ulyána Feódorovna, I 'll tell thee what,"— began Efrém;—"I 'll go to the inn myself immediately; and do thou be kind, dear little mother; give me a little glass of liquor to cure me of my drunkenness."

Ulyána reflected.

"Well,"—she decided at last,—"I 'll give thee some liquor, Efrém Alexándritch; only look out, don't dally."

"Be at ease, Ulyána Feódorovna."

And, having fortified himself with a glass of liquor, Efrém set out for the inn.

Day had but just dawned when he rode up to the inn, and at the gate a cart was already standing harnessed, and one of Naúm's labourers was sitting on the driver's seat, holding the reins in his hands.

"Whither art thou going?"—Efrém asked him.

"To town,"—replied the labourer.

"Why?"

The labourer merely shrugged his shoulders and made no reply. Efrém sprang from his horse and entered the house. In the anteroom he ran across Naúm, fully dressed, and wearing a cap.

"I congratulate the new landlord on his new domicile,"—said Efrém, who was personally acquainted with him.—"Whither away so early?"

"Yes, there is cause for congratulation,"—replied Naúm, surlily.—"This is my first day, and I have almost been burnt out."

Efrém started.—"How so?"

"Why, just that; a kind man turned up, who tried to set the house on fire. Luckily, I caught him in the act; now I 'm taking him to town."

"It can't be Akím, can it?" . . . . asked Efrém, slowly.

"And how dost thou know? It is Akím. He came by night, with a firebrand in a pot, and had already crept into the yard, and laid a fire . . . . All my lads are witnesses.—Wouldst like to take a look? But, by the way, 't is high time we were carrying him off."

"Dear little father, Naúm Ivánitch,"—began Efrém,—"release him; don't utterly ruin the old man. Don't take that sin on your soul, Naúm

Iványitch. Just reflect,—the man is desperate,—he has lost, you know . . . ."

"Stop that prating!"—Naúm interrupted him.—"The idea! As though I would let him go! Why, he would set me on fire again to-morrow. . . ."

"He will not do it, Naúm Iványitch, believe me. Believe me, you yourself will be more at ease so—for, you see, there will be inquiries—the court—you surely know what I mean."

"Well, and what about the court? I have nothing to fear from the court. . . ."

"Dear little father, Naúm Iványitch, how can you help fearing the court? . . ."

"Eh, stop that; I see that thou art drunk early, and to-day is a feast-day, to boot."

Efrém suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, fell to weeping.

"I am drunk, but I 'm speaking the truth,"—he blurted out.—"But do you release him, in honour of Christ's festival."

"Come, let 's be starting, cry-baby."

And Naúm went out on the porch. . . .

"Forgive him for Avdótya Aréfyevna's sake,"—said Efrém, following him.

Naúm approached the cellar, and threw the door wide open. Efrém, with timorous curiosity, craned his neck from behind Naúm's back, and with difficulty made out Akím in one corner of the shallow cellar. The former wealthy house-

holder, the man respected in all the countryside, was sitting with pinioned arms on the straw, like a criminal. . . On hearing the noise, he raised his head. . . . He seemed to have grown frightfully thin in the last two days, especially during the last night—his sunken eyes were hardly visible beneath his lofty brow, yellow as wax, his parched lips had turned dark . . . his whole face had undergone a change, and assumed a strange expression: both harsh and terrified.

"Get up and come out,"—said Naúm.

Akím rose, and stepped across the threshold.

"Akím Semyónitch,"—roared Efrém,—"thou hast ruined thyself, my dear man!"

Akím glanced at him in silence.

"If I had known why thou didst ask for liquor, I would n't have given it to thee; indeed, I would n't! I do believe I would have drunk it all myself! Ekh, Naúm Iványitch,"—added Efrém, seizing Naúm by the hand;—"have mercy on him, let him go!"

"Thou 'rt joking,"—retorted Naúm, with a grin.—"Come out, there,"—he added, again addressing Akím. . . "What art thou waiting for?"

"Naúm Ivánoff," . . . . began Akím.

"What?"

"Naúm Ivánoff,"—repeated Akím;—"listen; I am guilty; I wanted to punish thee myself; but God must judge between thou and me. Thou

hast taken everything from me, thou knowest that thyself—everything, to the very last morsel.—Now thou canst ruin me, and this is all I have to say to thee: If thou wilt release me now—well! let things stand! do thou possess everything! I agree, and wish thee all success. And I say to thee, as in the presence of God: If thou dost release me—thou shalt not regret it. God bless thee!"

Akím shut his eyes, and ceased speaking.

"Certainly, certainly,"—retorted Naúm;—"as though one could trust thee!"

"But thou canst, by God, thou canst!"—said Efrém; "really, thou canst. I 'm ready to go bail for Akím Semyónitch with my head—come now, really!"

"Nonsense!"—exclaimed Naúm.—"Let 's be off!"

Akím looked at him.

"As thou wilt, Naúm Iványitch. Thou hast the power. Only, thou art taking a great deal on thy soul. All right, if thou art impatient,—let us start. . . ."

Naúm, in his turn, darted a keen glance at Akím. "But it really would be better,"—he thought to himself, "to let him go to the devil! Otherwise, folks will devour me alive. There 'll be no living for Avdótya." . . . . While Naúm was reasoning with himself no one uttered a single word. The labourer on the cart, who could see

everything through the gate, merely shook his head and slapped the reins on the horse's back. The other two labourers stood on the porch and also maintained silence.

"Come, listen to me, old man,"—began Naúm; —"if I let thee go,—and I forbid these fine fellows" (he nodded his head in the direction of the labourers) "to blab; shall we be quits, thou and I —thou understandest me—quits . . . . hey?"

"Possess everything, I say."

"Thou wilt not consider me in thy debt?"

"Thou wilt not be in debt to me, neither shall I be in debt to thee." Again Naúm was silent for a space.

"Well, take thy oath on that!"

"I do, as God is holy,"—replied Akím.

"Here goes then, although I know beforehand that I shall repent of it,"—remarked Naúm. —"But so be it! Give me your hands."

Akím turned his back toward him; Naúm began to unbind him.

"Look out, old man,"—he added, as he slipped the rope over his wrists:—"remember, I have spared thee; be careful!"

"You 're a dear, Naúm Ivánitch,"—stammered the deeply-moved Efrém.—"The Lord will be merciful to you!"

Akím stretched out his chilled and swollen arms, and was starting for the gate. . . .

All of a sudden Naúm "turned Jewish," as

the expression is—evidently, he was sorry that he had released Akím. . . .

"Thou hast taken an oath, look out,"—he shouted after him.

Akím turned round, and surveying the house with an embracing glance, said sadly:—"Possess thou everything, forever, undisturbed . . . . farewell."

And he stepped quietly into the street, accompanied by Efrém. Naúm waved his hand, ordered the cart to be unharnessed, and went back into the house.

"Whither away, Akím Semyónitch? Art not thou coming to my house?"—exclaimed Efrém,—perceiving that Akím turned to the right from the highway.

"No, Efrémushka, thanks,"—replied Akím. . . . "I will go and see what my wife is doing."

"Thou canst see later on. . . . But now thou must for joy . . thou knowest . . . ."

"No, thanks, Efrém. . . . I 've had enough as it is. Farewell."—And Akím walked away without looking behind him.

"Eka! He has had enough as it is!"—ejaculated the astounded chanter;—"and I have taken my oath on his behalf! Well, I did n't expect this,"—he added with vexation,—"after I had vouched for him. Phew!"

He remembered that he had forgotten to take his knife and pot, and returned to the inn. . . .

Naúm gave orders that his things should be delivered to him, but it never entered his head to entertain him. Thoroughly enraged and completely sober he presented himself at home.

"Well, what?"—his wife asked him;—"didst thou find him?"

"Did I find him?"—retorted Efrém;—"certainly I found him; there are thy utensils for thee."

"Akím?"—inquired his wife, with special emphasis.

Efrém nodded his head.

"Yes, Akím. But what a goose he is! I went bail for him; without me he would have been put in prison, and he never even treated me to a glass of liquor. Ulyána Feódorovna, do you, at least, show me consideration; give me just one little glass."

But Ulyána Feódorovna showed him no consideration and drove him out of her sight.

In the meantime, Akím was proceeding with quiet strides along the road which led to Lizavéta Prókhorovna's village. He had not yet been able fully to recover himself; he was all quivering inside, like a man who has but just escaped imminent death. He seemed not to believe in his freedom. With dull amazement he stared at the fields, at the sky, at the larks which were fluttering their wings in the warm air. On the previous day, at Efrém's house, he had not slept at all since

dinner, although he had lain motionless on the oven; at first he had tried to drown with liquor the intolerable pain of injury within him, the anguish of wrathful, impotent indignation . . . . but the liquor could not entirely overcome him; his heart waxed hot within him, and he began to meditate how he might pay off his malefactor. . . . He thought of Naúm alone; Lizavéta Prókhorovna did not enter his head, and from Avdótya he mentally turned away. Toward evening, the thirst for revenge had blazed up in him to the point of crime, and he, the good-natured, weak man, with feverish impatience waited for the night, and like a wolf pouncing on its prey, he rushed forth with fire in his hand to annihilate his former home. . . But he had been captured . . . . locked up. . . . Night came. What had not he turned over in his mind during that atrocious night! It is difficult to convey in words all the tortures which he had undergone; it is all the more difficult, because these torments even in the man himself were wordless and dumb. . . . Toward morning, before the arrival of Naúm and Efrém, Akím had felt somewhat easier in mind. . . "Everything is lost!" . . . . he thought . . . . "everything is scattered to the winds!"— and he waved his hand in despair over everything. . . . If he had been born with an evil soul, he might have turned into a criminal at that moment; but evil was not a characteristic of Akím.

Beneath the shock of the unexpected and undeserved calamity, in the reek of despair, he had made up his mind to a felonious deed; it had shaken him to the very foundations, and, having miscarried, it had left behind in him a profound weariness. . . . Conscious of his guilt, he wrenched his heart free from all earthly things, and began to pray bitterly but zealously. At first he prayed in a whisper, at last, accidentally, perhaps, he ejaculated almost aloud: "O Lord!" —and the tears gushed from his eyes. . . . Long did he weep, then calmed down at last. . . . His thoughts probably would have undergone a change, had he been forced to smart for his attempt of the day before . . . but now he had suddenly recovered his liberty . . . and, half-alive, all shattered, but calm, he was on his way to an interview with his wife.

Lizavéta Prókhorovna's manor stood a verst and a half distant from her village, on the left-hand side of the country road along which Akím was walking. At the turn which led to the manor, he was on the point of pausing . . . . but he marched past. He had decided first to go to his former cottage, to his old uncle.

Akím's tiny and already rickety cottage was situated almost at the extreme end of the village; Akím traversed the entire length of the street without encountering a single soul. The whole population was in church. Only one ailing old

woman lifted her window to gaze after him, and a little girl, who had run out to the well with an empty bucket, gaped in wonder at him and also followed him with her eyes. The first person whom he met was precisely the uncle whom he was seeking. The old man had been sitting since early morning on the earthen bank outside the cottage under the windows, taking snuff, and warming himself in the sun; he was not quite well, and for that reason had not gone to church; he was on his way to see another ailing old man, a neighbour, when he suddenly espied Akím. . . . He stopped short, let the latter come up to him, and looking him in the face, he said:

"Morning, Akímushka!"

"Morning,"—replied Akím, and stepping past the old man, he entered the gate to his cottage. . . . In the yard stood his horses, his cow, his cart; and his chickens were roaming about there also. . . . He entered the cottage in silence. The old man followed him. Akím seated himself on the bench, and rested his clenched fists on it. The old man gazed compassionately at him, from his stand at the door.

"And where is my housewife?"—inquired Akím.

"Why, at the manor-house,"—replied the old man, briskly. "She is there. They have placed thy cattle here, and thy coffers, just as they were—but she is yonder. Shall I go for her?"

Akím did not reply immediately.

"Yes, go,"—he said at last.

"Ekh, uncle, uncle,"—he articulated with a sigh, while the latter was taking his cap from its nail:—"dost thou remember what thou saidst to me on the eve of my wedding?"

"God's will rules all things, Akímushka."

"Dost thou remember how thou saidst to me that I was no fit mate for you peasants—and now see what a pass things have come to. . . . I myself have become as poor as a church mouse."

"A man can't make calculations against bad people,"—replied the old man;—"and as for him, the dishonest scoundrel, if any one were to teach him a good lesson, some gentleman, for instance, or any other power,—what cause would there be to fear him? The wolf recognised his prey."—And the old man put on his cap and departed.

Avdótya had but just returned from church when she was informed that her husband's uncle was inquiring for her. Up to that time she had very rarely seen him; he had not been in the habit of coming to their inn, and in general he bore the reputation of being a queer fellow; he was passionately fond of snuff, and preserved silence most of the time.

She went out to him.

"What dost thou want, Petróvitch? Has anything happened, pray?"

"Nothing has happened, Avdótya Aréfyevna; thy husband is asking for thee."

"Has he returned?"

"Yes."

"But where is he?"

"Why, in the village; he 's sitting in his cottage."

Avdótya quailed.

"Well, Petróvitch,"—she asked, looking him straight in the eye,—"is he angry?"

"'T is not perceptible that he is."

Avdótya dropped her eyes.

"Well, come along,"—she said, throwing on a large kerchief, and the two set out. They walked in silence until they reached the village. But when they began to draw near to the cottage, Avdótya was seized with such alarm that her knees trembled under her.

"Dear little father, Petróvitch,"—she said,—"do thou go in first. . . . Tell him that I have come."

Petróvitch entered the cottage and found Akím sitting buried in profound thought, on the self-same spot where he had left him.

"Well,"—said Akím, raising his head;—"has n't she come?"

"Yes, she has come,"—replied the old man.—"She 's standing at the gate. . . ."

"Send her hither."

The old man went out, waved his hand to

Avdótya, said to her: "Go along!" and sat down again himself on the earthen bank along the cottage wall. With trepidation Avdótya opened the door, crossed the threshold and paused. . . .

Akím looked at her.

"Well, Aréfyevna,"—he began,—"what are we—thou and I—to do now?"

"Forgive me,"—she whispered.

"Ekh, Aréfyevna, we are all sinful folks. What 's the use of discussing it!"

"That villain has ruined both of us,"—began Avdótya in a voice which jingled and broke, and the tears streamed down her face.—"Thou must not let things stand as they are, Akím Semyónitch; thou must get the money from him. Do not spare me. I am ready to declare under oath that I lent the money to him. Lizavéta Prókhorovna had a right to sell our house, but why should he rob us? . . . . Get the money from him."

"I have no money to receive from him,"—replied Akím, gloomily.—"He and I have settled our accounts."

Avdótya was astounded.—"How so?"

"Why, because we have. Knowest thou,"—pursued Akím, and his eyes began to blaze;—"knowest thou where I spent the night? Thou dost not know? In Naúm's cellar, bound hand and foot, like a ram, that 's where I spent last night. I tried to burn down his house, and he

caught me, did Naúm; he 's awfully clever! And to-day he was preparing to carry me to the town, but he pardoned me; consequently, there is no money coming to me from him. . . . ' And when did I ever borrow any money of thee? ' he will say. And am I to say: ' My wife took it out from under my floor, and carried it to thee? '—' Thy wife is a liar,' he will say. And would n't it be a big exposure for thee, Aréfyevna? Hold thy tongue, rather, I tell thee, hold thy tongue."

" Forgive me, Semyónitch, forgive me,"—whispered the thoroughly frightened Avdótya.

" That 's not the point,"—replied Akím, after remaining silent for a while:—" but what are we —thou and I—to do? We no longer have a home . . . nor money either. . . ."

" We 'll get along somehow, Akím Semyónitch;—we will ask Lizavéta Prókhorovna and she will help us; Kiríllovna has promised me that."

" No, Aréfyevna, thou mayest ask her for thyself along with thy Kiríllovna; thou and she are birds of a feather.[1] But I 'll tell thee what: do thou stay here, with God's blessing. I shall not stay here. Luckily, we have no children, and perhaps I shall not starve alone. One person can worry along alone."

" What wilt thou do, Semyónitch—dost mean to go as carrier again? "

[1] In Russian: " Berries from the same field."—Translator.

Akím laughed bitterly.

"A pretty carrier I would make, there 's no denying that! A fine, dashing young fellow thou hast picked out! No, Aréfyevna, that is not the same sort of business as marrying, for example; an old man is not fit for it. Only I will not remain here, that 's what; I won't have people pointing the finger at me . . . . understand? I shall go to pray away my sins, Aréfyevna, that 's where I shall go."

"What sins hast thou, Semyónitch?"—articulated Avdótya, timidly.

"Well, wife, I know what they are."

"But in whose care wilt thou leave me, Semyónitch? How am I to live without a husband?"

"In whose care shall I leave thee? Ekh, Aréfyevna, how thou sayest that, forsooth! Much need hast thou of a husband like me, and an old man and a ruined one to boot. The idea! Thou has dispensed with me before, thou canst dispense with me hereafter also. And what property we have left thou mayest take for thyself, curse it! . . . . "

"As thou wilt, Semyónitch,"—replied Avdótya, sadly;—"thou knowest best about that."

"Exactly so. Only, don't think that I am angry with thee, Aréfyevna.

"No, what 's the use of being angry, when . . . . I ought to have discovered how things stood earlier in the day. I myself am to blame—

and I am punished."—(Akim heaved a sigh.)—"As you have made your bed, so you must lie upon it.[1] I am advanced in years, and 't is time for me to be thinking of my soul. The Lord Himself has brought me to my senses. Here was I, seest thou, an old fool, who wanted to live at his ease with a young wife. . . . No, brother—old man, first do thou pray, and beat thy brow against the earth, and be patient, and fast. . . . And now, go, my mother. I am very tired and I will get a bit of sleep."

And Akím stretched himself out, grunting on the bench.

Avdótya started to say something, stood for a while gazing at him, then turned and went away. . . .

"Well, did n't he thrash thee?"—Petróvitch asked her, as he sat, all bent double, on the earthen bank, when she came alongside of him. Avdótya passed him in silence.—"See there now, he did n't beat her,"—said the old man to himself, as he grinned, ruffled up his hair, and took a pinch of snuff.

Akím carried out his purpose. He speedily put his petty affairs in order, and a few days after the conversation which we have transcribed, he went, already garbed for the journey, to bid

[1] In Russian: "If you are fond of sleighing, then be fond also of dragging the sledge."—Translator.

farewell to his wife, who had settled for the time being in a tiny wing of the mistress's manor-house. Their leave-taking did not last long. . . . Kiríllovna, who chanced to be on hand, advised Akím to present himself to the mistress; and he did so. Lizavéta Prókhorovna received him with a certain amount of confusion, but affably permitted him to kiss her hand, and inquired where he was intending to betake himself? He replied that he was going first to Kíeff, and thence whereever God should grant. She lauded his purpose, and dismissed him. From that time forth he rarely made his appearance at home, although he never forgot to bring his mistress a blessed bread with a particle taken out for her health. . . .[1]

[1] Tiny double loaves of leavened bread, like those used in preparing the Holy Communion, are sold at the entrances to churches. Any one who wishes to have the health of his living or the souls of his dead friend prayed for, buys a loaf, and sends it to the sanctuary before the beginning of the morning service, accompanied by a slip of paper, whereon is written: "For the health" (or "For the soul") "of Iván"—or whatever the friend's baptismal name may be. The priest removes from the loaf with his spear-shaped knife a triangular particle, which he places on the chalice (it is not used in the Communion), and at a certain point of the service, all these persons are prayed for, by name—the Lord being aware which of the Iváns or Máryas is intended. After the service the loaf is returned to the owner, who carries it home, and (when possible) gives it to the person who has been prayed for. It is the custom for pilgrims to the various shrines to bring back loaves of this sort to their friends, and these are highly prized. At some of the famous monasteries, instead of the customary imprint of a cross and the Greek letters meaning "Jesus Christ the Conqueror," which are used on the loaves for the Communion, a special holy bread (prosforá) is prepared for this purpose, stamped with the Saint or Saints for which the locality is renowned. In the primitive church, the worshippers were wont to bring offerings of bread, wine, oil and wheat, for the requirements of the service. As long as the congregations were not numerous, all such givers were

But, on the other hand, everywhere where devout Russians congregate, his gaunt and aged but still comely and sedate face was to be seen: at the shrine of St. Sergius, and on the White Shores, and in the Óptin Hermitage, and in distant Valaám.[1] He went everywhere. . . . This year he passed you in the ranks of the countless throng which marched in a procession of the cross behind the holy picture of the Birth-giver of God at the Korennáya Hermitage;[2] next year you would find him sitting with his wallet on his back, along with other pilgrims on the porch of St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker in Mtzensk. . . . He made his appearance in Moscow nearly every spring.

From place to place he trudged with his quiet, unhurried but unceasing stride—'t is said that he even went to Jerusalem. . . . He appeared to be perfectly composed and happy, and many persons talked about his piety and humility, espe-

prayed for by name. When members became so numerous that this would have been burdensome, the custom was instituted of praying for the Sovereign and his family, as representatives of all the rest: and this last custom still prevails, mingled (as above described) with a remnant of the original custom.—Translator.

[1] The shrine of St. Sergius at the Tróitzky (Trinity) monastery, forty miles from Moscow. The Óptin Hermitage in Tambóff Government. "The White Shores"—the famous monasteries of Solovétzk, in the White Sea, and at Byélo-Ózero (White Lake), south of Lake Onéga. Valáam, an island in Lake Ladóga, with another famous monastery.—Translator.

[2] The Korennáya Hermitage lies about sixteen miles northwest of Kursk, in southern Russia. Mtzensk, nearer the centre, is half-way between Orél and Túla.—Translator.

cially those people who had chanced to converse with him.

In the meanwhile, Naúm's affairs throve exceedingly. He took hold briskly and understandingly, and, as the saying is, went to the head fast. Everybody in the neighbourhood knew by what means he had acquired possession of the inn, and they knew also that Avdótya had given him her husband's money; no one liked Naúm because of his cold and harsh character. . . . . They narrated with condemnation concerning him that one day he had replied to Akím himself, who had begged alms under his window, "God will provide," and had brought out nothing to him; but all agreed that no more lucky man than he existed; his grain throve better than his neighbours' grain; his bees swarmed more abundantly; even his hens laid more eggs; his cattle never fell ill; his horses never went lame. . . . . For a long time Avdótya could not endure to hear his name (she had accepted Lizavéta Prókhorovna's offer, and had again entered her service in the capacity of head-seamstress); but eventually, her aversion diminished somewhat; 't was said that want forced her to have recourse to him, and he gave her a hundred rubles. . . . We shall not condemn her too severely; poverty will break any one's spirit, and the sudden revolution in her life had aged and tamed her down greatly; it is difficult to believe how quickly she

lost her good looks, how she grew disheartened and low-spirited. . . .

"And how did it all end?"—the reader will ask.

Thus: Naúm, after having conducted his business successfully for fifteen years, sold his inn on profitable terms to a petty burgher. . . . He never would have parted with his house if the following apparently insignificant incident had not occurred: two mornings in succession his dog, as it sat in front of the windows, howled in a prolonged and mournful manner; on the second occasion he went out into the street, gazed attentively at the howling dog, shook his head, set off for the town, and that very day agreed on the price with a petty burgher, who had long been trying to purchase his inn. . . . A week later he departed for some distant place—out of the Government,—and what think you? that very night the inn was burned to the ground; not even a kennel remained intact, and Naúm's successor was reduced to beggary. The reader can easily imagine what rumours arose in the neighbourhood concerning this conflagration. . . . Evidently he carried his "luck" away with him, all declared. . . . It is reported that he engaged in the grain business, and became very wealthy. But was it for long? Other equally firm pillars have fallen prone, and sooner or later a bad deed has a bad ending.

It is not worth while to say much about Lizavéta Prókhorovna: she is alive to this day, and as often happens with people of that sort, she has not changed in the least; she has not even aged much, but only seems to have grown more lean; moreover, her penuriousness has increased to an extreme degree, although it is difficult to understand for whom she is always hoarding, since she has no children, and is related to no one. In conversation she frequently alludes to Akím, and avers that ever since she discovered all his fine qualities, she has come to cherish a great respect for the Russian peasant. Kiríllovna has purchased her freedom from Lizavéta Prókhorovna for a considerable sum and has married, for love, some fair-haired young butler or other, at whose hands she endures bitter torture; Avdótya is living, as of yore, in the woman's wing of Lizavéta Prókhorovna's house, but has descended several rungs lower, dresses very poorly, almost filthily, and retains not a trace of the cityfied affectations of the fashionable maid, or the habits of a well-to-do landlady. . . . No one takes any notice of her, and she herself is glad that they do not; old Petróvitch is dead, but Akím is still roving on pilgrimages—and God alone knows how much longer he is destined to wander!

FATHERS AND CHILDREN

(1861)

FATHERS AND CHILDREN

I

'WELL, Piótr? Is anything to be seen yet?" inquired a gentleman a little over forty years of age, in a dusty coat and checked trousers, on May 20th, 1859, as he emerged hatless upon the low porch of a posting-station on the * * * highway, of his servant, a chubby-faced young fellow, with whitish down on his chin, and small, dull eyes.

The servant, whose every characteristic—the turquoise ear-ring in his ear, and his pomaded, party-coloured hair, and the urbane movements of his body,—everything, in a word,—betrayed a man of the newest, perfected generation, gazed condescendingly along the road, and replied: "Nothing at all, sir, is to be seen."

"Is nothing to be seen?" repeated the gentleman.

"Nothing is to be seen," replied the servant, for the second time.

His master sighed, and seated himself on the bench. Let us make the reader acquainted with him, while he sits there, with his feet tucked up under him, and gazing thoughtfully around him.

His name is Nikolái Petróvitch Kirsánoff. At a distance of fifteen versts [1] from the posting-station, he has a fine estate of two hundred souls, or—as he is in the habit of expressing it since he portioned off to the peasants their land and set up a "farm"—of two thousand desyatínas [2] of land. His father, a fighting general of 1812, able to read and write only indifferently, coarse, but not vicious, a Russian man, had toiled hard for a livelihood all his life, had commanded first a brigade, then a division, and had lived uninterruptedly in the rural districts, where, by virtue of his rank, he had played a fairly prominent part. Nikolái Petróvitch had been born in the south of Russia, like his elder brother Pável, of whom we shall speak hereafter, and had been reared, up to his fourteenth year, at home, surrounded by cheap tutors, free-and-easy but obsequious adjutants, and other regimental and staff officers. His mother, from the family of the Kolyázins, called Agathe as a young girl, and as Madame the wife of the General, Agafokléa Kuzmínishna Kirsánoff, belonged to the category of "masterful-commanderesses,"—wore sumptuous caps and rustling silken gowns, went up first to kiss the cross in church, talked loudly and much, admitted her children to kiss her hand every morning, made the sign of the cross in blessing over them at night,

[1] Ten miles.—TRANSLATOR.
[2] A desyatína equals 2.70 acres.—TRANSLATOR.

—in a word, led an enjoyable life. In his quality of son of a general, Nikolái Petróvitch, although he not only was not distinguished for courage, but had even earned the nickname of a little coward, was forced, like his brother Pável, to enter the military service; but he broke his leg the very day that the news of his appointment arrived, and, after lying in bed for two months, remained a "limpy" for the rest of his life. His father gave up all hope of him, and allowed him to enter the civil service. He took him to Petersburg, as soon as he was eighteen, and placed him in the university. His brother, by the way, graduated into the Guards as an officer, just about that time. The young men began to live together, in one set of lodgings, under the remote supervision of a grand-uncle on their mother's side, Ilyá Kolyázin, an important official. Their father went back to his division and to his spouse, and only occasionally sent to his sons big quarto sheets of grey paper, scrawled over in a bold, clerkly script. At the end of these quarto sheets, carefully encircled by "curly-cues," flaunted the words: "Piótr Kirsánoff, Major-General." In 1835 Nikolái Petróvitch graduated from the university with the degree of candidate, and, in that same year, General Kirsánoff, having been put on the retired list for an unsuccessful review, arrived in Petersburg with his wife, with the intention of living there. He was on the point of hiring a house near the

Tauris Garden,[1] and joining the English Club, when he suddenly died of apoplexy. Agafokléa Kuzmínishna speedily followed him: she could not get accustomed to the dull life of the capital; the grief of her position on the retired list worried her to death. In the meantime, Nikolái Petróvitch had succeeded, already during the lifetime of his parents, and to their no small chagrin, in falling in love with the daughter of an official named Prepolóvensky, the former landlord of his lodgings, a pretty and, it was said, a well-educated young girl: she read the serious articles, under the department labelled "Science," in the newspapers. He married her, as soon as the period of mourning was over, and quitting the Ministry of the Imperial Appanages, where he had been entered through the influence of his father, he enjoyed felicity with his Másha, first in a villa near the Forestry Institute, then in town, in a tiny and pretty apartment with a clean staircase and a rather cold drawing-room, and, at last, in the country, where he definitively settled down, and where a son, Arkády, was shortly born to him. The husband and wife lived very well and quietly: they were hardly ever separated—they read together, played four-handed pieces together on the piano,

[1] The Tauris Garden, part of which is open to the public in summer, lies in a good residential quarter of the town, attached to the Tauris Palace. The latter was built in 1783 by the Empress Katharine II. for Prince Patyómkin, after his conquest of the Crimea. It was soon bought back, at Patyómkin's death, by the Crown.—Translator.

sang duets; she planted flowers, and supervised the poultry-yard; he went hunting on rare occasions, and occupied himself with the farming; and Arkády grew, and grew—also well and quietly. In the year '47, Kirsánoff's wife died. He hardly survived this blow, and his hair turned grey in the course of a few weeks: he contemplated going abroad, for the purpose of diverting his mind . . . but the year '48 arrived at this juncture . . . . . willy-nilly, he returned to the country, and after a rather prolonged season of inactivity he undertook agricultural reforms. In the year 1855, he took his son to the university: he spent three winters with him in Petersburg, going out hardly at all, and endeavouring to strike up acquaintance with Arkády's youthful comrades. He was unable to come for the last winter,—and here we behold him, in May of the year 1859, already completely grey, plump, and rather stooping: he is awaiting his son, who, like himself in years gone by, has graduated with the degree of candidate.

The servant, out of a sense of decorum, and possibly also because he did not wish to remain under his master's eye, stepped under the gate-arch and lighted his pipe. Nikolái Petróvitch hung his head, and began to stare at the decrepit steps of the porch; a large, piebald chicken stalked pompously past him, with a sturdy thud of its big, yellow feet; a bespattered cat stared at him in hostile wise, as she crouched primly on the rail-

ing. The sun was burning hot: from the half-dark anteroom of the posting-station an odour of warm rye bread was wafted. Our Nikolái Petróvitch fell into a reverie: "Son . . . candidate . . . . Arkásha . . . ." kept incessantly circling through his brain; he made an effort to think of something else, and again reverted to the same thoughts. He called to mind his dead wife. . . . "She did not live to see this day!" he whispered mournfully. . . . . A fat, dark-blue pigeon flew down into the road, and hastily betook itself to the puddle beside the well, to drink. Nikolái Petróvitch began to stare at it, but his ear already caught the rumble of approaching wheels.

"I think they are coming, sir," announced the servant, popping out from under the gate.

Nikolái Petróvitch sprang to his feet, and strained his eyes along the road. A tarantás made its appearance, drawn by a tróïka of posting-horses: in the tarantás there was a gleam of the band of a student's cap, the familiar outline of a beloved face.

"Arkásha! Arkásha!" shouted Kirsánoff, and started on a run, flourishing his arms. . . . . A few moments later, his lips were glued to the beardless, dusty, and sunburnt cheek of the young candidate.

II

"LET me shake myself, papa,"—said Arkády, in a voice that was rather hoarse from the journey, but ringing and youthful, cheerily responding to his father's caresses,—"I am daubing thee all over."

"Never mind, never mind," Nikolái Petróvitch repeated again and again, with a smile of emotion, and he administered a couple of blows with his hand on the collar of his son's cloak and on his own overcoat.—"Let me look at thee, let me look at thee," he added, stepping off, but immediately strode toward the posting-station with hasty steps, reiterating: "Here, come along, come along, and let us have horses as speedily as possible."

Nikolái Petróvitch appeared to be far more agitated than his son: it was as though he were somewhat bewildered, as though he were intimidated. Arkády stopped him.

"Papa," he said, "allow me to introduce to thee my good friend Bazároff, of whom I have so often written to thee. He has been so amiable as to consent to pay us a visit."

Nikolái Petróvitch wheeled swiftly round, and stepping up to a man of lofty stature, in a long peasant's overcoat with tassels, who had only just alighted from the tarantás, he warmly shook the bare, red hand which the man did not immediately offer him.

"I am heartily glad," he began,—"and grateful to you for your kind intention to visit us: I hope . . . Permit me to inquire your name and patronymic?"

"Evgény Vasílitch,"—replied Bazároff, in a languid but manly voice, and turning down the collar of the peasant coat, he displayed his entire face to Nikolái Petróvitch. Long and thin, with a broad forehead, a nose which was flat at the top and pointed at the tip, with large, greenish eyes, and pendent sidewhiskers of a sandy hue, it was rendered animated by a calm smile, and expressed self-confidence and cleverness.

"I trust, my dearest Evgény Vasílitch, that you will not be bored with us,"—went on Nikolái Petróvitch.

Bazároff's thin lips moved slightly; but he made no reply, and merely lifted his cap. His dark-blond hair, long and thick, did not conceal the huge protuberances of his ample skull.

"Well, what are we to do, Arkády?"—began Nikolái Petróvitch, again turning to his son.—"Shall we have the horses put to at once? Or do you wish to rest?"

"We will rest at home, papa; give orders to have the horses put to."

"Immediately, immediately," assented his father.—"Hey, there, Piótr, dost thou hear? Look lively there, my good brother; see to things."

Piótr, who, in his quality of improved domestic, had not kissed his young master's hand, but had merely bowed to him from a distance, again vanished inside the gate.

"I am here with a calash, but there are three horses for thy tarantás," said Nikolái Petróvitch hastily, while Arkády was drinking water out of an iron dipper brought by the keeper of the posting-station, and Bazároff lighted his pipe and stepped up to the postilion, who was unharnessing his horses.—"The calash has only two seats, and I do not know how thy friend . . . ."

"He will drive in the tarantás,"—interrupted Arkády, in an undertone.—"Please do not stand on ceremony with him. He 's a splendid young fellow, so simple,—thou wilt see."

Nikolái Petróvitch's coachman brought out the horses.

"Come, turn round, Thickbeard!"—said Bazároff to the postilion.

"Dost hear, Mitiúkha," put in another postilion, who was standing near, with his hands thrust into the rear slits of his sheepskin coat,—"what the gentleman called thee? Thickbeard it was."

Mitiúkha merely shook his cap, and drew the reins from the sweating shaft-horse.

"Be quick, be quick, my lads, lend a hand,"—exclaimed Nikolái Petróvitch,—"and you 'll get something for liquor!"

In a few minutes the horses were harnessed; father and son seated themselves in the calash, and Piótr climbed on the box; Bazároff jumped into the tarantás and buried his head in the leather pillow,—and both equipages rolled off.

III

" So here thou art a candidate at last, and hast come home,"—said Nikolái Petróvitch, touching Arkády now on the shoulder, now on the knee:—" at last! "

" And how is uncle? Well? " asked Arkády, who, despite the genuine, almost childish joy which filled his heart, wished to change the conversation as speedily as possible from an agitated into a commonplace current.

" Yes. He had intended to drive over with me to meet thee, but changed his mind for some reason or other."

" And hast thou been waiting long for me? "—asked Arkády.

" Why, about five hours."

" Good papa! "

Arkády turned briskly toward his father, and gave him a resounding smack on the cheek. Nikolái Petróvitch laughed softly.

" What a magnificent horse I have prepared for thee! "—he began:—" thou wilt see. And thy room has been papered."

" And is there a chamber for Bazároff? "

" We 'll find one for him also."

"Please, papa, do pet him a bit. I cannot express to thee to what a degree I prize his friendship."

"Thou hast not known him very long?"

"Not very long."

"That is why I did not see him last winter. In what does he interest himself?"

"His principal subject is the natural sciences. But he knows everything. He wants to take his examination for the doctor's degree next year."

"Ah! so he's in the medical faculty,"—remarked Nikolái Petróvitch, and relapsed into silence.—"Piótr," he added, and stretched out his hand,—"aren't those our peasants coming yonder?"

Piótr gazed on one side, in the direction whither his master was pointing. Several peasant carts, drawn by horses with slackened bridles, were rolling briskly along the narrow country road. In each cart sat one, or at the most two, peasants in sheepskin coats which were open on the breast.—"Exactly so, sir," said Piótr.

"Whither are they going—to town?"

"I suppose it must be to the town. To the dram-shop,"—he added scornfully, and leaned a little toward the coachman, as though referring to him. But the latter did not even stir: he was a man of the old school, who did not share the latest views.

"I am having a great deal of trouble with the peasants this year,"—pursued Nikolái Petróvitch, addressing his son.—"They will not pay their quit-rent.[1] What wouldst thou do?"

"And art thou satisfied with thy hired labourers?"

"Yes,"—said Nikolái Petróvitch between his teeth.—"They are stirring them up to mischief, that 's the trouble; however, no regular attempt has been made, as yet. They ruin the harnesses. But they have done the ploughing all right. When difficulties are surmounted, all goes well again. But art thou already interested in the farming?"

"You have no shade, and that 's a great pity,"—remarked Arkády, without answering the last question.

"I have added a large awning on the north side, over the balcony," said Nikolái Petróvitch:—"and now we can dine in the open air."

"It will look awfully like a suburban villa . . . however, all that is of no consequence. What air there is here! How splendidly fragrant it is! Really, it seems to me that nowhere in the world is it so fragrant as in these parts! And then the sky here . . ."

Arkády suddenly paused, cast a sidelong glance behind him, and became silent.

"Of course,"—remarked Nikolái Petróvitch,

[1] The *obrók*, or sum paid in lieu of personal labor.—Translator.

—"thou wert born here, and everything here ought to seem to thee peculiarly . . . ."

"Well, papa, it makes no difference where a man was born."

"But . . . ."

"No, it makes absolutely no difference."

Nikolái Petróvitch gazed askance at his son, and the calash had traversed half a verst before the conversation was resumed between them.

"I do not remember whether I wrote to thee," —began Nikolái Petróvitch,—"that thy former nurse, Egórovna, was dead."

"Really? Poor old woman! And is Prokófitch alive?"

"Yes, and has not changed in the least. He still grumbles as of old. On the whole, thou wilt not find many changes at Márino."

"Hast thou still the same overseer?"

"Why, the change in the overseer is about the only one I have made. I have decided not to keep any more emancipated, former house-servants, or, at least, not to entrust them with any duties which involve responsibility." (Arkády indicated Piótr with his eyes.) *"Il est libre, en effet,"*—remarked Nikolái Petróvitch, in a low tone,—"but, you see, he is my valet. Now I have a petty burgher as overseer: he seems a practical young fellow. I have appointed him a salary of two hundred and fifty rubles a year. However,"—added Nikolái Petróvitch, rubbing his

forehead and eyebrows with his hand, which with him was always a sign of inward perturbation,— "I have just told thee that thou wouldst not find any changes at Márino. . . That is not quite correct. I consider it my duty to warn thee, although . . ."

He faltered for a moment, and then continued, in French.

"A strict moralist would regard my frankness as misplaced, but, in the first place, it is impossible to conceal the fact, and, in the second, thou art well aware that I have always entertained peculiar principles with regard to the relations between father and son. But, of course, thou wilt have a right to condemn me. At my age . . . . In a word . . . that . . . that young girl, of whom thou hast, in all probability, already heard . . ."

"Fénitchka?" asked Arkády easily.

Nikolái Petróvitch flushed.—"Please do not mention her name aloud. . . . Well, yes . . . she is now living with me. I have lodged her in my house . . . . there were two small rooms there. However, that can be changed."

"And why, pray, papa?"

"Thy friend is to visit thee . . it is awkward . . ."

"Please do not worry thyself, so far as Bazároff is concerned. He is above all that sort of thing."

"Well, thou . . . in short,"—said Nikolái Petró-

vitch,—" the small wing is in a sorry state—that 's the difficulty."

" Upon my word, papa,"—interpolated Arkády,—" thou wouldst seem to be making apologies; art thou not ashamed of thyself? "

" Of course, I ought to be ashamed of myself," —replied Nikolái Petróvitch, growing more and more crimson in the face.

" Enough, papa,—enough, please,"—Arkády smiled affectionately. " What is there to apologise for! " he thought to himself, and a sensation of condescending tenderness toward his kind, gentle father, mingled with a feeling of a certain superiority over him, filled his soul.—" Stop, please,"—he repeated once more, involuntarily enjoying the consciousness of his own progressiveness and freedom.

Nikolái Petróvitch cast a look at him from beneath the fingers of the hand with which he continued to rub his forehead, and something stung him at the heart. . . . But he immediately took himself to task.

" Here is where our fields begin,"—he said, after a long silence.

" And that is our forest, yonder ahead, I think? "—inquired Arkády.

" Yes, it is ours. Only, I have sold it. It will be felled this year."

" Why didst thou sell it? "

"I needed the money: and, besides, this land goes to the peasants."

"Who do not pay thee their quit-rent?"

"That 's their affair; however, they will pay up some time or other."

"It is a pity about the forest,"—remarked Arkády, and began to gaze about him.

The localities through which they were passing could not be called picturesque. Fields, nothing but fields, stretched away to the very horizon, now rising gently, again sinking; here and there small patches of forest were visible, and here and there ravines, overgrown with sparse, low bushes, wound in and out, recalling to the eye the representations of them on ancient plans of the time of Katherine II. Here and there, also, small streams were to be encountered, with washed-out banks, and tiny ponds with wretched dams, and little hamlets with low cottages under dark roofs, which often had been half swept away, and lop-sided threshing-sheds with wattled walls of brushwood, and churches, now of brick with the stucco peeled off in places, now of wood, with slanting crosses and ruined graveyards. Arkády's heart gradually contracted. As though expressly, they kept meeting peasants in clothing which was too tight with long wear, on wretched nags; like beggars in rags stood the roadside willows, with tattered bark and broken branches;

thin, scabby, apparently famished cows were greedily nibbling at the grass along the ditches. They seemed to have just succeeded in tearing themselves from some menacing, death-dealing talons,—and, evoked by the pitiful aspect of the debilitated beasts, amid the fine spring day, there arose the white wraith of the cheerless, endless winter, with its blizzards, frosts, and snows. . . . "No,"—thought Arkády, "this is not a rich land; it does not strike the beholder with its abundance or its industry; it is impossible, impossible for it to remain like this; reforms are indispensable . . . but how are they to be brought about, how is one to set to work? . . ."

Thus did Arkády meditate . . . and while he was meditating, the spring asserted its rights. Everything round about was ringing with a golden sound, everything was stirring with broad, soft agitation and shining beneath the tranquil breath of the warm breeze,—everything,—trees, bushes, and grass; everywhere the larks were carolling in unending, sonorous floods; the lapwings were alternately shrilling, as they soared in circles above the low-lying meadows, and silently hopping over the hillocks; the daws stalked about, handsomely black against the tender green of the spring rye, which was still low of growth; they preached sermons in the rye, which was already turning slightly whitish, only now and then showing their heads amid its smokelike billows. Ar-

kády gazed, and gazed, and his meditations gradually faded away, then vanished altogether. . . . He flung off his uniform coat, and looked at his father so merrily, so much like a young boy, that the latter embraced him once more.

"We have not much further to go now,"—remarked Nikolái Petróvitch,—"we have only to ascend yonder hill, and the house will be visible. We are going to get on together splendidly, Arkásha; thou shalt help me with the farming, if it does not bore thee. We must become intimate with each other now; we must know each other well, must we not?"

"Of course,"—said Arkády:—"but what a magnificent day this is!"

"It is in honour of thy arrival, dear heart. Yes, it is spring in all its glory. But I agree with Púshkin—dost thou remember, in 'Evgény Onyégin':

> "How sad is thy coming to me,
> Spring, spring, the time of love!
> How . . . ."

"Arkády!"—rang out Bazároff's voice from the tarantás:—"send me a match. I have no means of lighting my pipe."

Nikolái Petróvitch relapsed into silence, and Arkády, who had begun to listen to him, not without a certain surprise, but also not without sym-

pathy, hastened to pull a silver match-box from his pocket and despatch it to Bazároff by Piótr.

"Wilt thou have a cigar?"—shouted Bazároff again.

"Hand it over,"—replied Arkády.

Piótr returned to the calash, and handed him, in company with the match-box, a thick, black cigar, which Arkády immediately lighted, disseminating about him such a strong and acrid odour of rank tobacco that Nikolái Petróvitch, who had never smoked in his life, involuntarily—though unperceived, in order not to offend his son—turned away his nose.

A quarter of an hour later, both carriages drew up at the steps of a new wooden house, painted grey, and covered with a red iron roof. This was Márino, also Nóvaya-Slobódka; or, according to the peasants' name for it, Bobýly-Khutór.[1]

[1] *Nóvaya-Slobódka*, New Suburb: *Bobýly-Khutór*, Landless Farm.—TRANSLATOR.

IV

No throng of house-servants poured forth upon the porch to welcome the masters: the only person who showed herself was a little girl of twelve, and in her wake there emerged from the house a young lad who bore a strong resemblance to Piótr, clad in a grey, livery round jacket, with white armouried buttons, the servant of Pável Petróvitch Kirsánoff. He silently opened the door of the calash, and unbuttoned the apron of the tarantás. Nikolái Petróvitch, with his son and Bazároff, walked through a dark and almost empty hall,[1] from behind whose door they caught a fleeting glimpse of a young, feminine face, to the drawing-room, which was already furnished in the latest taste.

"Here we are at home,"—said Nikolái Petróvitch, removing his cap, and shaking back his hair.—"The chief thing now is to have supper and to rest."

"It really would not be a bad idea to have something to eat,"—remarked Bazároff, stretching himself, and dropping down on a couch.

"Yes, yes, serve supper as quickly as possible."

[1] The "hall" is a combination of music-room, ball-room, and play-room.—Translator.

—Nikolái Petróvitch stamped his feet, without any visible cause.—"By the way, here is Prokófitch."

There entered a man of fifty, white-haired, thin, and swarthy, in a light-brown frock-coat with brass buttons, and a pink kerchief round his throat. He grinned, kissed Arkády's hand, and bowing to the guest, retreated to the door, and put his hands behind him.

"Here he is, Prokófitch,"—began Nikolái Petrovitch,—"he has come to us, at last. . . . Well? What dost thou think of him?"

"He is in the best condition, sir," said the old man, and grinned again, but immediately knit his thick brows.—"Do you command the table to be set?"—he said impressively.

"Yes, yes, if you please. But will you not go to your room first, Evgény Vasílitch?"

"No, thank you, there 's no necessity. Only, please give orders to have my little trunk carried thither, and this horrid old garment, also," he added, taking off the peasant-coat.

"Very good. Prokófitch, take his coat." (Prokófitch, in a sort of stupefaction, grasped the "horrid old garment" in both hands, and elevating it high above his head, withdrew on tiptoe.) "And thou, Arkády, wilt thou go to thine own room for a minute?"

"Yes, I must get myself clean," replied Arkády, and started toward the door; but at that

moment there entered the drawing-room a man of medium stature, dressed in a dark English suit, a fashionable, low necktie, and low, patent-leather shoes,—Pável Petróvitch Kirsánoff. In appearance, he was about forty-five years of age: his closely-clipped grey hair shaded dark in certain lights, like new silver; his face, sallow, but devoid of wrinkles, remarkably regular and pure in outline, as though carved out with a light, delicate chisel, displayed traces of remarkable beauty: especially fine were his brilliant, black, almond-shaped eyes. The whole person of Arkády's uncle, elegant and high-bred, preserved its youthful grace, and that aspiration, upward, away from the earth, which generally disappears after the twentieth year. Pável Petróvitch drew from the pocket of his trousers his beautiful hand with its long, rosy nails, which seemed still more beautiful from the snow-whiteness of his cuff buttoned with a single large opal, and gave it to his nephew. Having accomplished the preliminary European "shake-hands," he exchanged three kisses with him, in Russian fashion,—that is to say, he thrice touched his cheek with his perfumed moustache, —and said: "Welcome!"

Nikolái Petróvitch introduced him to Bazároff: Pável Petróvitch slightly bent his supple form, and slightly smiled, but he did not offer his hand, and even put it back in his pocket.

"I had already begun to think that you would

not arrive to-day,"—he said in a pleasant voice, amiably swaying, twitching his shoulders, and displaying his very fine white teeth.—"Did anything happen on the road?"

"Nothing happened," replied Arkády,—"we were a little late, that is all. But we are as hungry as wolves. Hurry up Prokófitch, papa, and I will be back immediately."

"Wait, I will go with thee,"—exclaimed Bazároff, suddenly tearing himself from the divan. The two young men left the room.

"Who is that?"—asked Pável Petróvitch.

"A friend of Arkásha's, a very clever man, according to him."

"Is he going to make you a visit?"

"Yes."

"That hirsute fellow?"

"Well, yes."

Pável Petróvitch drummed on the table with his finger-nails:—"I think that Arkády *s'est dégourdi,*" he remarked.—"I am glad he has come back."

At supper there was very little conversation. Bazároff, in particular, said hardly a word, but he ate a great deal. Nikolái Petróvitch narrated various anecdotes from his farmer's life, as he expressed it, discussed the impending administrative measures, committees, delegates, the necessity of introducing machinery, and so forth. Pável Petróvitch paced slowly to and fro in the dining-

room (he never supped), once in a while taking a sip from his wine-glass filled with red wine, and still more rarely uttering some remark, or, rather, some exclamation, like "Ah!" "Ehe!" "H'm!" Arkády communicated some Petersburg news, but he felt a slight embarrassment—the embarrassment which generally takes possession of a young man when he has just ceased to be a child and has returned to the place where people have been accustomed to see him and regard him as a child. He lengthened out his speech unnecessarily, avoided the word "papa," and once he even superseded it with the word "father,"—emitted, it is true, through his teeth; with superfluously free and easy manner, he poured out into his glass a great deal more wine than he wanted, and drank the whole of it. Prokófitch never took his eyes off him, and merely made a chewing movement with his lips. They all separated immediately after supper.

"That uncle of thine is a queer sort of fish," —said Bazároff to Arkády, sitting down in his dressing-gown beside him on his bed, and sucking away at a short pipe.—"One can't help thinking that he has a pretty dandified style for the country. And his nails, why, you could send his nails to the exposition!"

"But thou art, evidently, ignorant of the fact," —replied Arkády,—"that he was a society lion in his time. I will tell thee his history one of these

days. You see, he was a beauty, and turned the women's heads."

"You don't say so! He does it now in memory of the old days. There is n't any one to fascinate here, more's the pity. I kept watching him: what wonderful cuffs he has, just as though they were made of stone, and his chin is so accurately shaved. It 's ridiculous, is n't it, Arkády Nikoláevitch?"

"Possibly: only, he really is a fine man."

"An archaic manifestation! But thy father is a splendid fellow. There 's no good in his reading poetry, and he probably has n't much sense about the farming, but he 's a good soul."

"My father is a man of gold."

"Hast thou noticed that he is timid?"

Arkády shook his head, just as though he were not timid himself.

"Astonishing phenomenon these elderly romanticists!"—went on Bazároff. "They develop their nervous system to the point of exasperation . . . well, and then the equilibrium is destroyed. But good-bye! There 's an English washstand in my room, but the door will not lock. All the same, English washstands[1]—that is to say, progress—must be encouraged!"

Bazároff went off, and a sensation of joy took possession of Arkády. It is sweet to fall

[1] The Russian washstand has a reservoir of water on top, and no plug, and the water is liberated by a foot-treadle.—TRANSLATOR.

asleep in the parental home, in the familiar bed, over which loved hands have toiled, perhaps the hands of an old nurse, those caressing, kind, indefatigable hands. Arkády recalled Egórovna, and sighed, and breathed a prayer that the kingdom of heaven might be hers. . . He did not pray for himself.

Both he and Bazároff promptly fell asleep, but it was a long time still before the other persons in the house got to sleep. The return of his son had excited Nikolái Petróvitch. He went to bed, but did not extinguish his candle, and propping his head on his hand, he indulged in a prolonged reverie. His brother sat in his study until long after midnight, in a capacious Gámboff [1] easy-chair, in front of the fireplace, in which hard coal was faintly smouldering. Pável Petróvitch had not undressed himself, but had merely replaced his low patent-leather pumps with red Chinese slippers without heels. He held in his hands the last number of *Galignani,* but he did not read it; he stared intently into the grate, where the bluish flame flickered, now dying down, now flashing up .... God knows where his thoughts were roaming, but they were not roaming in the past alone: the expression of his face was concentrated and gloomy, which is not the case when a man is engrossed in memories only. And in a tiny rear room, on a large coffer, sat the young woman, Fé-

[1] A well-known cabinet-maker of that period.—TRANSLATOR.

nitchka, in a sky-blue short jacket,[1] with a white kerchief thrown over her dark hair, and alternately listened, dozed, and stared at the door, which stood ajar, beyond which a child's bed was visible, and the even breathing of a sleeping child was audible.

[1] Literally a "soul-warmer": a wadded peasant-jacket, either tight fitting to the waist, below which it has close organ plaits: or falling from the shoulders in broad box-plaits to the waist: and with very long, tapering sleeves.—TRANSLATOR.

V

On the following morning, Bazároff awoke earlier than any of the others, and went out of doors. "Ehe!" he thought, after casting a glance around him, "this is n't a very showy place." When Nikolái Petróvitch had portioned off the land between himself and the peasants, he had been obliged to assign for his new manor-house four desyatínas of perfectly flat and naked fields. He had erected a house, offices, and farm-buildings, had laid out a garden, had dug a pond and a couple of wells; but the young trees had struck root badly, very little water had collected in the pond, and the water in the wells proved to have a brackish taste. Only one arbour of lilacs and acacia had grown fairly well: in it they sometimes drank tea and dined. In a few minutes, Bazároff had made the round of all the paths in the garden, had paid a little visit to the cattle-yard and to the stable, had hunted out two small boys belonging to the house-servants, with whom he had immediately struck up an acquaintance, and had gone off with them to a small marsh, situated about a verst distant from the manor-house, in quest of frogs.

"What dost thou want frogs for, master?" one of the little boys asked him.

"Why, for this,"—replied Bazároff, who possessed a special faculty for inspiring the lower classes with confidence in him, although he never indulged them, and treated them carelessly:—"I 'm going to split the frog open, and see what is going on inside of it; and as thou and I are exactly like frogs, except that we walk on our legs, then I shall also know what is going on inside of us."

"But what dost thou want to know that for?"

"In order that I may not make mistakes, if thou shouldst fall ill and I had to cure thee."

"Art thou a doctur?" [1]

"Yes."

"Dost hear, Váska, the gentleman says that thou and I are just the same as frogs. Wonderful!"

"I 'm afraid of them, of frogs,"—remarked Váska, a lad of seven, with a head as white as flax, clad in a grey kazák coat with a standing collar, and barefooted.

"What is there to be afraid of? they don't bite, do they?"

"Come, now, hop into the water, you philosophers,"—said Bazároff.

In the meantime, Nikolái Petróvitch had also waked up, and had betaken himself to Arkády,

[1] The peasant pronunciation.—Translator.

whom he found dressed. Father and son went out on the veranda, under the shelter of the awning: close to the railings, on a table between big bunches of lilacs, the samovár was already bubbling. A little girl made her appearance—the same one who had been the first to meet the travellers on the porch—and said in a shrill voice:

"Feodósya Nikoláevna does not feel quite well, and cannot come; she ordered me to ask you, whether you will pour tea for yourselves, or shall she send Dunyásha?"

"I will pour it myself, myself,"—Nikolái Petróvitch caught her up hastily.—"How dost thou take thy tea, Arkády,—with cream or with lemon?"

"With cream,"—replied Arkády, and after a brief pause he ejaculated:—"Papa!"

Nikolái Petróvitch looked at his son with discomfiture.—"What?"—he said.

Arkády dropped his eyes.

"Excuse me, papa, if my question seems to thee improper,"—he began; "but thou, thyself, by thy frankness yesterday, hast challenged me to frankness .... thou wilt not be angry? ...."

"Speak on."

"Thou givest me boldness to ask thee... Is n't Fen ... is n't it because I am here that she is not coming to pour the tea?"

Nikolái Petróvitch turned slightly aside.

"Perhaps,"—he said at last,—"she supposes . . . she is ashamed . . . ."

Arkády swiftly turned his eyes on his father.

"There is no necessity for her to feel ashamed. In the first place, thou art acquainted with my manner of thought" (Arkády found it extremely pleasant to utter these words); "and, in the second place, have I the desire to interfere, by so much as a hair's-breadth, with thy life, thy habits? Moreover, I am convinced, that thou couldst not make a bad choice: if thou hast permitted her to live under one roof with thee, she must be worthy of it; in any case, the son is not his father's judge, and in particular I—and in particular of such a father, who, like thyself, has never restricted my freedom in any respect whatever."

Arkády's voice had trembled at first: he felt that he was magnanimous, but, at the same time, he understood that he was delivering something in the nature of an exhortation to his father; but the sound of his own speech acts powerfully on a man, and Arkády uttered his closing words firmly, even effectively.

"Thanks, Arkásha,"—said Nikolái Petróvitch in a dull tone, and again his fingers strayed over his eyebrows and his forehead.—"Thy assumptions really are correct. Of course, if that girl were not worthy . . . This is not a fickle fancy. It is not easy for me to talk to thee about this; but thou understandest that it was difficult for

her to come hither, into thy presence, especially on the first day of thy home-coming."

"In that case, I will go to her myself,"—cried Arkády, with a fresh impulse of magnanimous sentiments, and he jumped up from the table.—"I will explain to her that she has no cause to feel ashamed before me."

Nikolái Petróvitch rose also.

"Arkády,"—he began,—"please . . . how is it possible . . . there . . . . I have not forewarned thee . . . ."

But Arkády was no longer listening to him, and had quitted the veranda. Nikolái Petróvitch looked after him, and sank down on his chair in confusion. His heart beat violently. . . . Whether it was that, at that moment, the inevitable strangeness of the future relations between him and his son presented itself to him, or that he recognised the fact that Arkády would have shown almost more respect for him had he not touched on that matter at all, or whether he was reproaching himself with weakness—it would be difficult to say: all those feelings were within him, but in the shape of sensations—and not clear sensations, at that: but the flush did not leave his face, and his heart beat violently.

Hasty footsteps became audible, and Arkády emerged upon the veranda.—"We have made acquaintance, father!"—he cried, with an expression of affectionate and amiable triumph on his

face.—" Feodósya Nikoláevna really is not very well to-day, and will come later. But why didst not thou tell me that I had a brother? I would have given him a good kissing yesterday evening, as I have done just now."

Nikolái Petróvitch tried to say something, tried to rise and hold out his arms. . .

Arkády threw himself on his neck.

" What 's this? Hugging each other again? " —rang out Pável Petróvitch's voice behind them.

Father and son were equally delighted at his appearance at that moment: there are touching situations, from which, notwithstanding, one wishes to escape as promptly as possible.

" Why art thou surprised? "—said Nikolái Petróvitch merrily.—" I have been longing for Arkásha for ages . . . . I have n't yet had a chance to stare my fill at him since yesterday."

" I 'm not surprised in the least,"—remarked Pável Petróvitch:—" I 'm even not disinclined to give him a hug myself."

Arkády stepped up to his uncle, and again felt on his cheeks the touch of his perfumed moustache. Pável Petróvitch seated himself at the table. He wore an elegant morning costume, in English fashion; his head was adorned with a tiny fez. This fez and his carelessly knotted tie hinted at the freedom of country life; but the stiff shirt-collar—not white, it is true, but coloured, as is

proper for a morning toilet—impinged upon the well-shaved chin with its habitual implacability.

"Where is thy new friend?"—he asked Arkády.

"He is not in the house; he generally rises early and goes off somewhere. The chief point is, that one need pay no attention to him: he is not fond of ceremony."

"Yes, that is evident."—Pável Petróvitch began, in a leisurely way, to spread butter on his bread.—"Is he going to make thee a long visit?"

"That is as it happens. He has turned aside here, on his way to his father's."

"And where does his father live?"

"In our government, eighty versts from here. He has a small estate there. He used to be a regimental doctor."

"Te, te, te, te..... That is precisely the reason why I have kept asking myself: Where have I heard that name Bazároff? . . . Nikolái, does my memory serve me, and was not the medical man in our father's division Bazároff?"

"It strikes me that it was."

"Precisely, precisely. So that medical man is his father. H'm!"—Pável Petróvitch twitched his moustache.—"Well, and what sort of person is Mr. Bazároff himself?" he asked, with pauses between the words.

"What sort of person is Bazároff?"—Ar-

kády laughed.—"Would you like to have me tell you, my dear uncle, what sort of person he is?"

"Pray do, my dear nephew."

"He is a nihilist."

"What?"—asked Nikolái Petróvitch; and Pável Petróvitch elevated his knife, with a bit of butter sticking to the blade, in the air, and remained motionless.

"He is a nihilist,"—repeated Arkády.

"A nihilist," said Nikolái Petróvitch.—"That comes from the Latin *nihil, nothing,* so far as I can judge; consequently, that word designates a man who . . . who recognises nothing."

"Say: 'who respects nothing,'"—put in Pável Petróvitch, and devoted himself once more to his butter.

"Who treats everything from a critical point of view,"—remarked Arkády.

"And is n't that exactly the same thing?"—inquired Pável Petróvitch.

"No, it is not exactly the same thing. A nihilist is a man who does not bow before any authority whatever, who does not accept a single principle on faith, with whatever respect that principle may be environed."

"And dost thou think that is a good thing?"—interrupted Pável Petróvitch.

"That depends on who it is, dear uncle. It is all right for one man, and very bad for another."

"You don't say so. Well, I perceive that that

is not in our line. We people of the old school assume that, without princíples" (Pável Petróvitch pronounced this word softly, in the French style. Arkády, on the contrary, pronounced it "principles," throwing the accent on the first syllable), "without accepted princíples, as thou sayest, it is impossible to take a step, or to breathe, on faith. *Vous avez changé tout cela.* God grant us health and the rank of general, but we will content ourselves with admiring the Messrs. . . . . what do you call it?"

"The nihilists,"—said Arkády with much distinctness.

"Yes. They used to be Hegelists, and now they are nihilists. Let us see, how you will exist in the vacuum, in the atmospheric expanse; but now, be so good as to ring the bell, brother, Nikolái Petróvitch, it is time for me to drink my cocoa."

Nikolái Petróvitch rang, and shouted: "Dunyásha!" But, instead of Dunyásha, Fénitchka herself made her appearance on the veranda. She was a young woman of three and twenty, all white and soft, with dark hair and eyes, red, childishly-plump lips, and tender hands. She wore a neat print gown; a new, light-blue kerchief rested lightly on her plump shoulders. She carried a large cup of cocoa, and setting it down in front of Pável Petróvitch, became covered with confusion: the hot blood diffused itself in a crimson

flood beneath the delicate skin of her pretty face. She dropped her eyes, and remained standing beside the table, lightly resting upon it the very tips of her fingers. She seemed to be ashamed of having come, and, at the same time, she felt, apparently, that she had a right to come.

Pável Petróvitch knit his brows sternly, and Nikolái Petróvitch was overwhelmed with confusion.

"Good morning, Fénitchka,"—he muttered through his teeth.

"Good morning, sir,"—she replied, in a sonorous but not loud voice, and, casting a sidelong glance at Arkády, who bestowed a friendly smile on her, she softly withdrew. She walked with a slight waddle, but it suited her.

Silence reigned on the veranda for the space of several minutes. Pável Petróvitch sipped his cocoa, and suddenly raised his head.—"Here is Mr. Nihilist about to favor us with his company,"—he said, in an undertone.

And, in fact, Bazároff was coming through the garden, striding across the flower-beds. His linen coat and trousers were spattered with mud; a clinging marsh plant encircled the crown of his old, round hat; in his right hand he grasped a small bag; in the bag some live creature was squirming. He rapidly approached the veranda, and nodding his head, he said:—"Good morning, gentlemen; excuse me for being late to tea; I will

be back directly; I must provide for these prisoners."

"What have you there—leeches?"—inquired Pável Petróvitch.

"No, frogs."

"Do you eat them—or raise them?"

"They are for experiments,"—said Bazároff indifferently, and went into the house.

"He is going to cut them up,"—remarked Pável Petróvitch.—"He does not believe in princíples, but he does believe in frogs."

Arkády gazed at his uncle with compassion; Nikolái Petróvitch shrugged his shoulders on the sly. Pável Petróvitch himself was conscious that his witticism had not been a success, and began to talk about the farming operations, and the new overseer, who had come to him on the previous day to complain that labourer Fomá was "debaucheering" and was incorrigible. "He 's a regular Æsop," he said, among other things: "he has protested everywhere that he is a bad man; after he has lived a while longer, he 'll get rid of his folly."

VI

Bazároff returned, sat down at the table, and began hastily to drink tea. Both brothers stared at him in silence, while Arkády glanced stealthily, now at his father, now at his uncle.

"Have you walked far from here?"—asked Nikolái Petróvitch at last.

"You have a small swamp yonder, alongside the aspen grove. I started up five woodcock; thou mightest shoot them, Arkády."

"Don't you shoot?"

"No."

"Do you occupy yourself with the physical sciences in particular?"—inquired Pável Petróvitch, in his turn.

"Yes, with physics; with the natural sciences in general."

"The Germans, I am told, have made great progress in that department of late."

"Yes, the Germans are our teachers in that,"—replied Bazároff carelessly.

The word "Germántzy" Pável Petróvitch had employed, instead of "nyémtzy,"[1] by way of irony, which, however, no one noticed.

"Have you so high an opinion of the Ger-

[1] Nyémetz, "the dumb one," (that is to say: a person who cannot talk the language of the country), is applied to foreigners in general, and Germans in particular.—Translator.

mans?"—said Pável Petróvitch, with sedulous courtesy. He had begun to feel a secret irritation. His aristocratic nature was stirred to revolt by Bazároff's perfectly free-and-easy manners. That medical man's son was not only not afraid, he even replied abruptly and reluctantly, and there was something rude, almost insulting, in the very sound of his voice.

"The learned men there are a practical race."

"Just so, just so. Well, you probably have not so flattering an opinion of the Russian scientists?"

"Probably, that is so."

"That is very praiseworthy self-renunciation,"—ejaculated Pável Petróvitch, drawing up his figure, and throwing his head back.—"But how comes it that, as Arkády Nikoláitch was just telling us, you do not recognise any authorities? Do not you believe in them?"

"But why should I recognise them? And what should I believe in? They tell me a fact, and I believe it, that is all."

"But do the Germans all speak facts?"—said Pável Petróvitch, and his face assumed an indifferent, distant expression, as though he had wholly withdrawn into some height above the clouds.

"Not all,"—replied Bazároff, with a short yawn, being, evidently, unwilling to prolong the controversy.

Pável Petróvitch darted a glance at Arkády.

as much as to say: "Thy friend is polite, thou must admit that."—"So far as I myself am concerned,"—he began again, not without an effort, —"sinful man that I am, I am not fond of the Germans. I am not alluding to the Russian-Germans of course; every one knows what sort of birds they are. But I cannot stomach the German-Germans either. Those of former days are well enough; then they had Schiller, I believe, *Goetthe* . . . . . My brother here, accords them special favour. . . But now a lot of chemists and materialists have sprung up among them . . . . . "

"A respectable chemist is twenty times more useful than any poet,"—interrupted Bazároff.

"You don't say so!"—said Pável Petróvitch, and barely elevated his eyebrows, exactly as though he were in a doze.—"I suppose that you do not recognise art?"

"The art of making money without sensational aids!"—exclaimed Bazároff, with a scornful sneer.

"Exactly so, sir; exactly so, sir. You are pleased to jest. So you reject that? Let us assume that you do. That means that you believe only in science?"

"I have already told you that I believe in nothing; and what is science—science in general? There is science which is a trade, a vocation; but science in the abstract does not exist."

"Very good, sir. Well, and in regard to other

laws, which are accepted in human existence,—do you hold the same negative course about them?"

"What is this, a cross-examination?" inquired Bazároff.

Pável Petróvitch paled slightly. . . . . Nikolái Petróvitch regarded it as his duty to join in the conversation.

"You and I will discuss this subject more in detail, sometime, my dear Evgény Vasílitch; I will learn your opinion, and express my own. For my own part, I am very glad that you are devoting yourself to the natural sciences. I have heard that Liebig has made wonderful discoveries in regard to fertilising the land. You may be able to assist me in my agricultural work: you may be able to give me some useful advice."

"I am at your service, Nikolái Petróvitch; but what have we to do with Liebig! One must first learn the alphabet, and then take hold of a book, but so far we have not even set our eyes on A."

"Well, I perceive that thou really art a nihilist," thought Nikolái Petróvitch.—"Nevertheless, permit me to have recourse to you, in case of need,"—he added aloud.—"And now, brother, I think it is time for us to go and have a talk with the overseer."

Pável Petróvitch rose from his chair.

"Yes,"—said he, without looking at any one,—"'t is a great misfortune to live thus for five

years in the country, at a distance from great minds! One becomes a downright fool. One is endeavouring not to forget what he has learned, when—bang!—it suddenly appears that it is all nonsense, and one is told that sensible folks do not bother themselves any longer about such follies, and that one is as good as a simpleton who has fallen behind the times. What is one to do! Evidently, the young folks are really wiser than we are."

Pável Petróvitch wheeled slowly round on his heels, and slowly withdrew; Nikolái Petróvitch followed him.

"Well, is he always like that?"—inquired Bazároff coolly of Arkády, as soon as the door closed behind the two others.

"See here, Evgény, thy manner toward him has been altogether too abrupt,"—remarked Arkády.—"Thou hast offended him."

"Why, the idea of my coddling these rural aristocrats! Why, it 's nothing but self-conceit, the habits of a society lion, foppishness. Come now, he ought to have continued his career in Petersburg, since that is the cut of his jib. . . . However, God be with him—I wash my hands of him altogether! I have found a pretty rare specimen of a water-beetle, *Dytiscus marginatus*—dost thou know it? I 'll show it to thee."

"I promised to narrate his history to thee," began Arkády.

"The history of the beetle?"

"Come, stop that, Evgény. My uncle's history. Thou wilt see that he is not the sort of man that thou imaginest. He is more deserving of pity than of ridicule."

"I do not dispute that; but what is it to thee anyhow?"

"We must be just, Evgény."

"On what grounds?"

"No, listen. . . ."

And Arkády related to him his uncle's story. The reader will find it in the following chapter.

VII

Pável Petróvitch Kirsánoff had received his earliest education at home, like his younger brother, Nikolái, and, later on, in the Pages Corps. From his childhood, he had been distinguished for his remarkable beauty; added to this, he was self-confident, given to raillery, and splenetic in a rather amusing fashion—he could not fail to please. He began to be seen everywhere, as soon as he had become an officer. He was petted, and he coddled himself; he even played the fool, he even indulged in caprices, but this suited his style. The women went wild over him, the men called him a fop, and secretly envied him. He lived, as we have already said, in an apartment with his brother, whom he sincerely loved, although he did not resemble him in the least. Nikolái Petróvitch walked with a slight limp, had small, agreeable, but rather melancholy features, small, black eyes, and soft, thin hair; he liked to be lazy, but was also fond of reading, and was afraid of society. Pável Petróvitch never spent a single evening at home, gloried in his audacity and cleverness (he had brought gymnastics into fashion among the young men), and had read not

more than five or six books—in French—altogether. At the age of eight and twenty, he was already a captain; a brilliant career awaited him. All of a sudden, everything was changed.

At that time, a woman who has not yet been forgotten, Princess R . . , was wont to make her appearance, from time to time, in Petersburg society. She had a well-educated and decorous but somewhat stupid husband, and no children. She would suddenly go abroad, and as suddenly return to Russia, and, in general, she led a strange life. She bore the reputation of being a giddy coquette, gave herself up with enthusiasm to all sorts of pleasures, danced until she was ready to drop, laughed loudly and jested with the young men, whom she received, before dinner, in a half-darkened drawing-room, and at night wept and prayed, and found rest nowhere, and often flung herself about the room until daybreak, wringing her hands with grief, or sat, all pale and cold, reading the Psalter. Day arrived, and again she turned into a woman of the world, again she went out into society, laughed, chattered, and fairly rushed at everything which could afford the least diversion. She was wonderfully built; her hair, golden in hue and as heavy as gold, hung below her knees; yet no one would have called her a beauty; the only good point about her face was her eyes, and not even her eyes themselves—they were not large, and

were grey—but their glance, swift and deep, heedless to recklessness, and thoughtful to melancholy,—was a mysterious glance. There was an unusual gleam about them, even when her tongue was babbling the most idle nonsense. She dressed with elegance. Pável Petróvitch met her at a ball, danced the mazurka with her, in the course of which she did not utter a single sensible word, and fell passionately in love with her. Being accustomed to conquests, he speedily attained his object in this case also; but the ease of his victory did not chill him. On the contrary, he became still more torturingly, still more firmly attached to this woman, in whom, even when she had given herself irrevocably, there still seemed to linger something intimate and inaccessible, into which no one could penetrate. What it was that nested in that soul,—God only knows! She appeared to be in the grasp of some powers which were mysterious and unknown even to herself; they played with her as they would; her limited mind could not reconcile itself to their freaks. . . . Her whole conduct presented a series of incongruities; the only letters which might have aroused the just suspicions of her husband she wrote to a man who was almost a stranger to her, and her love had a taste of sadness: she neither laughed nor jested with the one whom she had chosen, and she listened to him, and gazed at him, with surprise. Sometimes, and in the majority

of cases suddenly, this surprise passed over into cold terror; her face assumed a wild and death-like expression; she locked herself up in her bedroom, and her maid, by putting her ear to the keyhole, could hear her subdued sobbing. More than once, on returning home after a tender tryst, Kirsánoff felt in his heart that lacerating and bitter vexation which springs up in the heart after a decisive failure. "What more do I want?" he would ask himself, but his heart continued to ache. One day he gave her a ring with a sphinx carved on the stone.

"What is this?"—she asked:—"a sphinx?"

"Yes,"—he replied,—"and that sphinx is—yourself."

"I?"—she asked, and slowly raised her enigmatic eyes to his.—"Do you know that is very flattering?"—she added, with an insignificant smile, but her eyes continued to wear their strange gaze.

Pável Petróvitch felt heavy at heart even when Princess R . . loved him; but when she grew cold toward him—and this came about rather promptly, he almost went crazy. He tormented himself, he raged with jealousy, he gave her no peace, he tagged about everywhere after her; his importunate persecution bored her, and she went abroad. He resigned from the service, despite the entreaties of his friends and the exhortations of his superior officers, and followed the Prin-

cess; he spent four years in foreign lands, now chasing after her, now intentionally losing sight of her: he was ashamed of himself, he was enraged at his pusillanimity . . . . but nothing did any good. Her image, that incomprehensible, almost absurd, but enchanting image, had ensconced itself too deeply in his soul. In Baden he somehow resumed his former relations with her, and, to all appearances, she had never loved him so passionately . . . but in a month all was at an end; the flame had flared up for the last time, and had been extinguished forever. With a foreboding of the inevitable parting, he endeavoured, at least, to remain her friend, as though friendship with such a woman were possible. . . . She quietly left Baden, and, from that day forth persistently avoided Kirsánoff. He returned to Russia, tried to take up his old life, but could no longer get into the former track. Like a hunted animal, he wandered from place to place; he still went into society—he had preserved all the habits of a man of the world; he could boast of two or three new conquests; but he no longer expected anything special of himself, or of others; he undertook no enterprises. He grew old, his hair turned grey; it became a necessity with him to sit at the club, to get bitterly bored, to dispute coldly in bachelor society,—which is well known to be a bad sign. As a matter of course, he did not dream of marriage. Ten years passed in this

manner, in a colorless, fruitless, swift, frightfully swift fashion. Nowhere does time fly so rapidly as in Russia; it is said that it flies still more swiftly in prison. One day, at dinner in the club, Pável Petróvitch heard of Princess R . . 's death. She had died in Paris, in a condition bordering on insanity. He rose from the table, and paced the rooms of the club for a long time, pausing, as though rooted to the spot, beside the card-tables, but he did not return home any earlier than usual. Some time later, he received a packet addressed to him: it contained the ring which he had given to the Princess. She had drawn lines, in the form of a cross, over the sphinx, and had requested that he should be told that the cross was the solution of the riddle.

This happened in the beginning of 1848, at the very time when Nikolái Petróvitch, having lost his wife, had come to Petersburg. Pável Petróvitch had hardly seen his brother since the latter had settled down in the country; Nikolái Petróvitch's marriage had coincided with the very first days of Pável Petróvitch's acquaintance with the Princess. On his return from abroad, he had gone to him, with the intention of spending a couple of months with him, of admiring his happiness, but he had lived only one week with him. The difference in the situation of the two brothers had proved to be too great. In 1848 that difference was lessened: Nikolái Petróvitch had

lost his wife, Pável Petróvitch had lost his memories: after the death of the Princess, he tried not to think of her. But Nikolái retained the consciousness of a life which had been regularly spent, his son was growing up before his eyes; Pável, on the contrary, a solitary bachelor, had entered upon that confused, twilight period, the period of regrets which resemble hopes, of hopes which resemble regrets, when youth is gone, and old age has not yet come.

This period was more difficult for Pável Petróvitch than for any other man: having lost his past, he had lost all.

"I do not invite thee to Márino now,"—Nikolái Petróvitch said to him one day (he had given his estate that name, in honour of his wife),—"thou wert bored there even during the lifetime of the deceased, but now, I think, thou wouldst perish with irksomeness."

"I was still stupid and restless then,"—replied Pável Petróvitch:—"since that time I have calmed down, even if I have not grown any wiser. Now, on the contrary, if thou shouldst invite me, I am ready to settle down in thy house forever."

In place of a reply, Nikolái Petróvitch embraced him; but a year and a half elapsed after this conversation before Pável Petróvitch made up his mind to put his intention into execution. On the other hand, having once settled down in the country, he did not again leave it, even during

those three winters which Nikolái Petróvitch spent in Petersburg with his son. He began to read, chiefly in English; he arranged his whole life, in general, on the English pattern, rarely met his neighbours, and went out only to the elections,[1] where he mostly held his tongue, only occasionally teasing and frightening the old-fashioned gentry by liberal sallies, and not making approaches to the younger generation. And both the former and the latter thought him a haughty man; and both sets of people respected him for his distinguished, aristocratic manners; for the rumours of his conquests; because he dressed very well and always occupied the best room in the hotel; because he dined well, as a rule, and had once even dined with Wellington at Louis Philippe's; because he always carried about with him everywhere a real silver toilet set, and a camp bath-tub; because he emitted an odour of some unusual, wonderfully "noble" perfumes; because he played whist in a masterly manner, and always lost; and, in conclusion, they respected him also because of his impeccable honesty. The ladies regarded him as a fascinating misanthrope, but he did not consort with the ladies. . . .

"So, now thou seest, Evgény,"—said Arkády, at the conclusion of his story,—"how unjustly thou judgest of my uncle! I will not even mention the fact that he has more than once rescued

[1] As Marshal of the Nobility.—TRANSLATOR.

my father from a catastrophe, has given him all his own money,—perhaps thou art not aware that their estate has not been divided,—but he is glad to help any one, and, among other things, he always stands up for the peasants; it is true that when he talks with them he wrinkles up his face and inhales eau de cologne. . . ."

"Of course: nerves,"—interrupted Bazároff.

"Perhaps, only he has a very kind heart. And he is far from stupid. What useful advice he has given me . . . . especially . . . especially about my relations with women."

"Aha! He has burnt himself with his own milk, so he blows on other people's water. We know all about that!"

"Well, in a word,"—went on Arkády:—"he is profoundly unhappy, believe me; it is a sin to despise him."

"Well, who despises him?"—retorted Bazároff.—"But I will say, nevertheless, that a man who has staked his whole life on a woman's love, and, when that card was trumped, turned sour and lost heart to such an extent that he became incapable of anything,—such a man—is not a man, but a male. Thou sayest that he is unhappy—thou knowest best; but all the whims have not gone out of him. I am convinced that he seriously regards himself as a practical man, because he reads that miserable *Galignani* and

once a month rescues a peasant from chastisement."

"But remember his education, the period in which he lived,"—remarked Arkády.

"His education?" retorted Bazároff.—"Every man is bound to educate himself,—well, as I have done myself, for example. . . . And so far as the period is concerned, who am I to depend upon that? Rather, let it depend upon me. No, brother, all that is groundless and frivolous! And what is there mysterious about the relations between a man and a woman? We physiologists know what those relations are. Just study the anatomy of the eye: where does what thou callest an enigmatic glance come from? That 's all romanticism, stuff and nonsense, rot, art. Come on, we 'd better go and look at my beetle."

And the two friends betook themselves to Bazároff's room, in which a certain medico-surgical odour, mingled with the scent of cheap tobacco, had already contrived to establish itself.

VIII

Pável Petróvitch did not remain present long at the interview between his brother and the manager, a tall, thin man, with a sweet, consumptive voice and crafty eyes, who, to all Nikolái Petróvitch's remarks, replied, " Certainly sir; that 's a fact, sir," and tried to make out that the peasants were drunkards and thieves. The farming, which had recently been rearranged on a new plan, was squeaking like an ungreased wheel, and cracking like home-made furniture fabricated from green wood. Nikolái Petróvitch was not discouraged, but he sighed frequently, and became thoughtful: he was conscious that matters would not go right without money, and almost all his money was exhausted. Arkády had spoken the truth: Pável Petróvitch had helped his brother more than once; more than once, perceiving that he was struggling and racking his brains in the effort to devise a way of escape, Pável Petróvitch had strolled slowly to the window, and, thrusting his hands into his pockets, had muttered through his teeth, *"Mais je puis vous donner de l'argent,"* and had given him money; but on this particular day he had nothing, and he preferred to with-

draw. The sordid details of farming made him melancholy; and, in addition, it constantly seemed to him that Nikolái Petróvitch, notwithstanding his zeal and industry, did not take hold of the business in the proper way; although he would not have been capable of pointing out to Nikolái Petróvitch precisely where he was in error. "My brother is not sufficiently practical," —he argued with himself,—"people cheat him." Nikolái Petróvitch, on the other hand, entertained a lofty opinion as to Pável Petróvitch's practical qualities, and always asked his advice. "I am a soft, weak man; I have spent all my life in the wilds,"—he was wont to say; "but not for nothing hast thou lived so much with people, thou knowest them well: thou hast the eye of an eagle." Pável Petróvitch's only reply to these words was to turn away; but he did not seek to change his brother's conviction.

Leaving Nikolái Petróvitch in the study, he walked along the corridor which separated the front part of the house from the rear part, and, reaching a low-browed door, he paused in thought, tugged at his moustache, and knocked.

"Who 's there? Come in,"—rang out Fénitchka's voice.

"It is I,"—said Pável Petróvitch, and opened the door.

Fénitchka sprang up from the chair on which she was sitting with her baby, and placing it in

the arms of the little girl, who immediately carried it out of the room, hastily adjusted her kerchief.

"Pardon me if I intrude,"—began Pável Petróvitch, without looking at her:—"I merely wished to ask you . . . . I believe some one is going to the town to-day . . . . order some green tea to be bought for me."

"Yes, sir,"—replied Fénitchka:—"how much do you order to be purchased?"

"Why, half a pound will be sufficient, I suppose. And I notice that you have made some changes here,"—he added, darting a swift glance around, which glided over Fénitchka's face also. —"Those curtains, yonder,"—he said, seeing that she did not understand him.

"Yes, sir, the curtains; Nikolái Petróvitch was so good as to give them to me; but they have been hung this long time."

"Yes, and I have not been to see you for a long time. You are very nicely established here now."

"Thanks to Nikolái Petróvitch,"—whispered Fénitchka.

"Are you more comfortable here than in your former wing?"—inquired Pável Petróvitch politely, but without the trace of a smile.

"Of course I am, sir."

"Who has been put in your place?"

"The laundress lives there now."

"Ah!"

Pável Petróvitch relapsed into silence. "Now he will go away," thought Fénitchka. But he did not go away, and she stood before him, as though rooted to the spot, weakly twisting her fingers.

"Why did you have your little one carried away?"—said Pável Petróvitch, at last.—"I love children: show it to me."

Fénitchka blushed scarlet all over with confusion and joy. She was afraid of Pável Petróvitch: he hardly ever spoke to her.

"Dunyásha,"—she called:—"bring Mítya" (Fénitchka addressed every one in the house as "you").—"But no, wait, I must put a clean dress on him."—Fénitchka went toward the door.

"Never mind about that,"—remarked Pável Petróvitch.

"I will be back in a moment,"—replied Fénitchka, and hastily left the room.

Pável Petróvitch was left alone, and this time he looked about him with particular attention. The contracted, low-ceiled little room in which he found himself was very clean and cosey. It smelled of the recently painted floor, of camomile and balm. Along the walls stood chairs with backs in the form of lyres; they had been bought by the late General, in Poland, during the campaign; in one corner stood a small bedstead, with muslin curtains, alongside a wrought-iron chest with a rounded lid. In the opposite corner burned

a shrine-lamp in front of a large, dark-coloured image of St. Nicholas the Wonder-worker; a tiny porcelain egg, suspended from the halo by a red ribbon, hung on the saint's breast; on the window-sills glass jars, with last year's preserves carefully tied up, admitted a green light; on their paper lids Fénitchka herself had written in large letters: "gosebery." Nikoláï Petróvitch was especially fond of that preserve. From the ceiling, on a long cord, hung a cage containing a bob-tailed canary-bird; it twittered and hopped about incessantly, and the cage incessantly rocked and trembled; grains of hemp-seed fell to the floor with a soft patter. On the wall between the windows, over a small chest of drawers, hung several fairly bad photographs of Nikoláï Petróvitch, in various attitudes, made by itinerant artists; there, also, hung a photograph of Fénitchka herself, which was an utter failure: some sort of an eyeless visage smiled constrainedly out of the dark frame,—and nothing more could be distinguished; and over Fénitchka, Ermóloff, in a felt cloak, was frowning in a menacing manner at the Caucasus Mountains in the distance, from beneath a silken slipper for pins, which fell clear down on his brow.

Five minutes elapsed. In the adjoining room rustling and whispering were audible. Pável Petróvitch picked up from the chest of drawers a greasy book, an odd volume of Masálsky's "The

Sharp-shooters" ("Stryeltzý"), and turned over a few pages. . . . The door opened, and Fénitchka entered, with Mítya in her arms. She had dressed him in a little red shirt with galloon on the collar, and had brushed his hair and wiped off his face: he breathed heavily, threw himself about with his whole body, and flourished his little hands, as all healthy babies do; but the foppish little shirt had taken effect on him: an expression of satisfaction emanated from his whole plump form. Fénitchka had brought her own hair into order also, and had put on her kerchief in the best possible manner; but she might as well have remained as she was. And, as a matter of fact, is there anything in the world more fascinating than a young and beautiful mother with a healthy baby in her arms?

"What a chubby child,"—said Pável Petróvitch condescendingly, and tickled Mítya's double chin with the tip of the long nail on his forefinger; the child fixed his eyes on the canary-bird, and began to laugh.

"This is uncle,"—said Fénitchka, bending her face over him, and rocking him softly, while Dunyásha quietly set a lighted pastille on the window-sill, placing a copper coin beneath it.

"How many months old is he?"—inquired Pável Petróvitch.

"Six months; the seventh month will begin soon, on the eleventh."

"Won't it be the eighth, Feodósya Nikoláevna?"—interposed Dunyásha, not without timidity.

"No, the seventh; how is that possible!"—The child crowed again, fixed his eyes on the chest, and suddenly grasped his mother's nose and lips with all five fingers.—"The spoiled child,"—said Fénitchka, without removing her face from his fingers.

"He resembles my brother,"—remarked Pável Petróvitch.

"Whom should he resemble, then?" thought Fénitchka.

"Yes,"—pursued Pável Petróvitch, as though talking to himself,—"there is an indubitable likeness."—He gazed at Fénitchka attentively, almost sadly.

"This is uncle,"—repeated she, in a whisper this time.

"Ah! Pável! so thou art here!"—rang out Nikolái Petróvitch's voice suddenly.

Pável Petróvitch hastily wheeled round, and knit his brows; but his brother gazed at him so joyfully, so gratefully, that he could not do otherwise than respond to him by a smile.

"Thou hast a splendid boy,"—he said, and looked at his watch;—"I dropped in here about my tea. . . . ."

And, assuming an indifferent expression, Pável Petróvitch immediately left the room.

"Did he come of his own accord?"—Nikolái Petróvitch asked Fénitchka.

"Yes, sir; he knocked and entered."

"Well, and has n't Arkásha been to see thee again?"

"No. Would n't it be better for me to remove to the wing, Nikolái Petróvitch?"

"Why so?"

"I am wondering whether it would not be better, at first."

"N . . . . no,"—articulated Nikolái Petróvitch with hesitation, and rubbed his forehead.—"It ought to have been done before. . . Good morning, thou fat little ball,"—he said, with sudden animation, and approaching the baby, he kissed him on the cheek; then he bent down a little, and pressed his lips on Fénitchka's hand, which shone white as milk against Mítya's little red shirt.

"Nikolái Petróvitch! what are you doing?"—she stammered, and dropped her eyes, then quietly raised them again. . . . The expression of her eyes was charming when she gazed, as it were, from beneath her brows, with an affectionate and somewhat stupid smile.

Nikolái Petróvitch had become acquainted with Fénitchka in the following manner. One day, three years before this time, he had been obliged to pass the night at a posting-station in a distant provincial town. He had been pleasantly

surprised at the cleanliness of the room which was assigned to him, and the freshness of the bed-linen: "Is not the landlady a German?" flashed through his mind; but it appeared that the house-wife was a Russian, a woman of fifty, neatly dressed, with comely, sensible face and dignified speech. He chatted with her over his tea; she pleased him greatly. Nikolái Petróvitch, at that time, had just moved into his new manor-house, and, not wishing to keep serfs about him, was on the lookout for hired servants; the landlady, on her side, complained of the small number of travellers in the town, of hard times; he proposed to her that she should enter his house in the capacity of housekeeper; she accepted. Her husband had been long dead, and had left her with only a daughter, Fénitchka. Two weeks later, Arína Sávishna (such was the name of the new housekeeper) arrived in company with her daughter at Márino, and established herself in the wing. Nikolái Petróvitch's choice turned out to be a happy one. Arína introduced order into the house. Of Fénitchka, who was already seventeen years old, no one spoke, and it was rarely that any one saw her: she lived quietly, modestly, and only on Sundays did Nikolái Petróvitch perceive in the parish church, somewhere on one side, the delicate profile of her rather pale face. More than a year passed in this manner.

One morning, Arína presented herself in his

study, and after making him a low reverence, according to her wont, she asked him whether he could not help her daughter, who had got a spark from the stove in her eye. Nikolái Petróvitch, like all stay-at-homes, occupied himself with medical treatment, and had even bought a homœopathic medicine-chest. He immediately ordered Arína to bring the sufferer. On learning that the master wanted her, Fénitchka was seized with a violent fit of timidity, but she followed her mother. Nikolái Petróvitch led her to the window, and grasped her head with both hands. After taking a good look at her reddened and swollen eye, he prescribed an eye-wash, which he himself compounded on the spot, and, tearing up his handkerchief, he showed her how she must bathe it; Fénitchka heard him out, and started to leave the room. "Come, kiss the master's hand, thou stupid creature," said Arína to her. Nikolái Petróvitch did not give her his hand, but, becoming confused, he kissed her on her bowed head, where the hair parted.

Fénitchka's eye soon got well, but the impression which she had made upon Nikolái Petróvitch did not soon pass away. Visions of that pure, tender, timidly uplifted face pursued him: he felt beneath his palms that soft hair; he beheld those innocent, slightly parted lips, from between which the pearly teeth gleamed moistly in the sunlight. He began, with great attention, to

watch her in church; he tried to enter into conversation with her. At first she was shy of him, and one day, toward evening, when she encountered him on a narrow path made by pedestrians through a rye-field, she retreated into the tall, thick rye, overrun with wormwood and cornflowers, simply for the sake of escaping his eyes. He caught a glimpse of her little head athwart the golden network of the grain-ears, whence she was peeping like a small wild animal, and called out to her pleasantly:

"Good day, Fénitchka! I don't bite!"

"Good day,"—she whispered, without quitting her ambush.

Little by little she began to grow accustomed to him; but she was still timid in his presence when, suddenly, her mother Arína died of the cholera. Where was Fénitchka to go? She had inherited from her mother a love of orderliness, good judgment, and dignity; but she was so young, so isolated; Nikolái Petróvitch was so kind and discreet. . . . There is no need to narrate the rest. . . . . .

"So my brother just walked into thy room?" —Nikolái Petróvitch asked her.—"He knocked and walked in?"

"Yes, sir,"

"Well, that 's good. Let me toss Mítya."

And Nikolái Petróvitch began to toss him up almost to the very ceiling, to the great delight

of the boy, and to the no small anxiety of the mother, who, at every upward flight, stretched out her hands toward his bare legs.

But Pável Petróvitch returned to his elegant study, hung with handsome paper of a grey tone, with weapons suspended on a motley-hued Persian rug, with walnut-wood furniture upholstered in dark-green mock velvet, a book-case in Renaissance style of antique dark oak, bronze statuettes on the magnificent writing-table, and a fireplace. . . . He flung himself on the couch, placed his hands under his head, and remained motionless, staring at the ceiling almost with despair. Whether it was that he wished to conceal from the very walls what was taking place on his face, or from some other cause, at all events, he rose, dropped the heavy window-curtains, and again flung himself on the couch.

IX

On that same day, Bazároff also made acquaintance with Fénitchka. He was walking about the garden with Arkády, and explaining to him why certain young trees, especially the oaks, had not taken root.

"You ought to set out as many silver poplars as possible here, and firs, and lindens, if you like, after adding black loam. That arbour, yonder, has thriven well,"—he added:—"because acacias and lilacs are good fellows—they require no nursing. Ba! why, there is some one there."

Fénitchka was sitting in the arbour with Dunyásha and Mítya. Bazároff came to a halt, and Arkády nodded to Fénitchka as to an old acquaintance.

"Who is that?"—Bazároff asked him, as soon as they had passed on.—"What a pretty woman!"

"Of whom art thou speaking?"

"It 's plain enough; there was only one pretty woman."

Arkády, not without embarrassment, explained to him, in brief words, who Fénitchka was.

"Aha!"—said Bazároff:—"thy father, evi-

dently, knows a good thing when he sees it. And I like thy father, I swear I do! He 's a fine fellow. But I must scrape acquaintance,"—he added, and went back to the arbour.

"Evgény!"—Arkády shouted after him, in alarm:—"be more cautious, for God's sake."

"Don't get excited,"—said Bazároff:—"I 'm a person of experience, I 've lived in cities."

Approaching Fénitchka, he pulled off his cap.

"Permit me to introduce myself,"—he began, with a polite bow:—"I 'm the friend of Arkády Nikoláevitch, and a man of peace."

Fénitchka half-rose from the bench, and gazed at him in silence.

"What a magnificent baby!"—went on Bazároff.—"Don't be alarmed, I have never cast the evil eye on any one yet. What makes his cheeks so red? Is he cutting his teeth?"

"Yes, sir,"—said Fénitchka:—"he has cut four teeth already, and now his gums have swollen up again."

"Show me . . . . come, don't be afraid, I 'm a doctor."

Bazároff took the child in his arms, and, to the astonishment of Fénitchka and Dunyásha, it displayed no resistance, and was not frightened.

"I see, I see. . . . It 's nothing; everything is all right: he 's going to have large teeth. If anything happens, let me know. And are you well yourself?"

"Yes, thank God."

"Thank God—that is the best of all. And you?"—added Bazároff, turning to Dunyásha.

Dunyásha, a girl who was very prim in the rooms of her mistress, and a great giggler elsewhere, only snorted by way of reply.

"Well, that's fine. Here's your hero for you."

Fénitchka took her baby in her arms.

"How quietly he sat with you!"—she said, in a low tone.

"All children behave quietly with me,"—replied Bazároff,—"I know the trick."

"Children feel who loves them,"—remarked Dunyásha.

"That is true,"—assented Fénitchka. "Here is Mítya,—he will not let some people take him in their arms on any terms."

"And will he come to me?"—asked Arkády, who, after standing for a time a little aloof, had now approached the arbour.

He allured Mítya to him; but Mítya flung his head back and began to scream, which greatly mortified Fénitchka.

"Another time—when he has managed to get used to me,"—said Arkády condescendingly, and the two friends went their way.

"What the deuce is her name?"—inquired Bazároff.

"Fénitchka.... Feodósya,"—replied Arkády.

"And her patronymic? I must know that also."

"Nikoláevna."

"*Bene.* What I like about her is that she does not get too much embarrassed. Any one else would, probably, condemn that in her. What nonsense! what is there to be embarrassed about? She is a mother—well, and she is in the right."

"She is in the right,"—remarked Arkády,—'but there is my father . . . . ."

"He is right too,"—interrupted Bazároff.

"Well, no, I don't think so."

"Evidently, an extra heir is not to our taste!"

"Art not thou ashamed to presuppose such thoughts in me!"—put in Arkády, with heat.—"It is not from that point of view that I regard my father as in the wrong. I think he ought to marry her."

"Ehe-he!"—said Bazároff calmly.—"How magnanimous we are! Thou still attributest significance to marriage; I had not expected that from thee."

The friends advanced several paces in silence.

"I have seen all thy father's outfit,"—began Bazároff again.—"The cattle are poor, and the horses are broken-down. The buildings, also, are pretty bad; the workmen are arrant idlers; and the overseer is either a fool or a rascal; I have not yet thoroughly made out which."

"Thou art severe to-day, Evgény Vasílievitch."

"And the good-natured peasants cheat thy father, without the shadow of a doubt. Thou knowest the adage: 'The Russian peasant will fool even God himself.'"

"I am beginning to agree with my uncle,"—remarked Arkády,—"thou certainly hast a bad opinion of the Russians."

"That's no great matter! The only good point about the Russian man is, that he has a very bad opinion of himself. The important thing is that twice two makes four, and that the rest is all nonsense."

"And is nature nonsense?"—said Arkády, gazing thoughtfully far away, across the mottled fields, beautifully and softly illuminated by the sun, which was already near to setting.

"And nature, also, is nonsense, in the sense in which thou understandest it. Nature is not a temple, but a workshop, and man is a workman therein."

The slow sounds of a violoncello floated to them from the house at that moment.

Some one was playing with feeling, although with an inexperienced hand, Schubert's "Expectation," and the sweet melody poured forth on the air like honey.

"Who's that?"—ejaculated Bazároff in amazement.

"That is my father."

"Does thy father play on the violoncello?"

"Yes."

"Why, how old is thy father?"

"Forty-four."

Bazároff suddenly burst into loud laughter.

"What art thou laughing at?"

"Upon my word! at the age of forty-four, a man, paterfamilias, in the * * * district, plays on the violoncello!"

Bazároff continued to laugh; but Arkády, in spite of the fact that he worshipped his teacher, did not even smile on this occasion.

X

About a fortnight passed. Life in Márino flowed on in its usual current: Arkády led the life of a Sybarite, Bazároff worked. Every one in the house had got accustomed to him, to his careless manners, to his uncomplicated and abrupt speeches. Fénitchka, in particular, had become so familiar with him that once she ordered him to be awakened at night: Mítya had been seized with convulsions; and he came, as was his wont, half-jesting, half-yawning, sat with her a couple of hours, and relieved the baby. On the other hand, Pável Petróvitch hated Bazároff with all the powers of his soul: he considered him proud, arrogant, a cynic, a plebeian; he had a suspicion that Bazároff did not respect him, that he almost despised him—him, Pável Kirsánoff! Nikolái Petróvitch was afraid of the young "nihilist," and had doubts as to the advantage of his influence on Arkády; but he liked to listen to him, he liked to be present at his physical and chemical experiments . . Bazároff had brought a microscope with him, and busied himself with it for hours together. The servants, also, became attached to him, although he jeered at them: they

felt that, nevertheless, he was their brother, not a lordly master. Dunyásha was fond of giggling with him, and cast oblique, significant glances at him as she flitted past like "a snipe"; Piótr, a man in the highest degree conceited and stupid, with strained furrows forever on his brow, a man whose sole merit lay in the fact that he had a polite aspect, read by spelling out the words, and frequently cleaned his coat with a brush—he, also, smiled and beamed as soon as Bazároff directed his attention to him; the house-servants' brats ran after the "doctur" like puppies. Old Prokófitch was the only one who did not like him, served him his food at table with a grim aspect, called him a "knacker" and a "swindler," and asserted that he, with his side-whiskers, was a regular pig in a bush. Prokófitch was, in his way, as much of an aristocrat as Pável Petróvitch.

The best days in the year arrived—the early days of June. The weather was fine; it is true that the cholera was threatening again at a distance, but the inhabitants of the * * * Government had already got used to its visitations. Bazároff rose very early, and went off two or three versts, not for a walk—he could not endure to walk without an object—but to collect herbs and insects. Sometimes he took Arkády with him. On the way home, they generally got into a dispute, and Arkády was generally worsted, although he talked more than his comrade.

One day they were very late, for some reason; Nikolái Petróvitch went out into the garden to meet them, and when he got on a level with the arbour he suddenly heard the swift footsteps and the voices of the two young men. They were walking on the other side of the arbour, and could not see him.

"Thou art not sufficiently well acquainted with my father,"—Arkády was saying.

Nikolái Petróvitch concealed himself.

"Thy father is a nice fellow,"—said Bazároff,—"but he 's a man who is behind the times,[1] his song is sung."

Nikolái Petróvitch lent an ear. . . . Arkády made no reply.

The man who was "behind the times" stood motionless for a couple of minutes, and slowly wended his way homeward.

"Day before yesterday I saw him reading Púshkin,"—went on Bazároff. . . . "Please explain to him that he ought not to do that. He is n't a boy, thou knowest: it 's time for him to fling aside all that twaddle. The idea of being a romanticist at the present day! Give him something practical to read."

"What ought I to give him?"—asked Arkády.

"Why, Bruchner's 'Stoff und Kraft,' I think, as a starter."

[1] The equivalent of "a back number."—TRANSLATOR.

"I think so myself,"—remarked Arkády approvingly.—"'Stoff und Kraft' is written in popular language. . . . ."

"See now, how thou and I,"—said Nikolái Petróvitch, after dinner on that same day, to his brother, as he sat in his study:—"have fallen into the ranks of the men behind the times, our song is sung. Well, what of that? Perhaps Bazároff is right; but I am hurt, I must confess: I had hoped, precisely at this time, to get into close and friendly relations with Arkády, but it turns out that I have lagged behind, he has gone ahead, and we cannot understand each other."

"But has he gone ahead? And in what way is he so greatly different from us?" exclaimed Pável Petróvitch impatiently.—"It 's that signor who has put all that into his head. I hate that miserable medical student; in my opinion, he is simply a charlatan; I am convinced that he has not got very far in physics, even with all his frogs."

"No, brother, do not say that: Bazároff is clever and learned."

"And what repulsive conceit!"—interrupted Pável Petróvitch again.

"Yes,"—remarked Nikolái Petróvitch:—"he is conceited. But, evidently, that cannot be dispensed with; only, this is what I cannot understand. Apparently, I am doing everything, in order not to be left behind the age: I have estab-

lished my peasants, I have set up a farm, so that I am even spoken of throughout the Government as a 'red.' I read, I study,—in general, I strive to keep up with contemporary requirements,—but they say that my song is sung. And I am beginning, brother, to think myself that it is sung."

"Why so?"

"This is why. To-day I was sitting and reading Púshkin. . . . I remember that I had happened upon 'The Gipsies.' . . All at once, Arkády came up to me, and in silence, with such affectionate compassion on his face, took the book away from me softly, as from a child, and laid before me another, a German book . . . smiled, and went away, carrying Púshkin with him."

"You don't say so! And what book did he give thee?"

"This one."

And Nikolái Petróvitch drew from the rear pocket of his coat Bruchner's very renowned pamphlet, in the ninth edition.

Pável Petróvitch turned it over in his hands.—"H'm!"—he muttered.—"Arkády Nikoláevitch is attending to thy education. Well, and hast thou tried to read it?"

"Yes."

"Well, and what was the result?"

"Either I am stupid, or all this is—nonsense. —It must be that I am stupid."

"But thou hast not forgotten thy German?"—asked Pável Petróvitch.

"I understand German."

Again Pável Petróvitch turned the book over in his hands, and cast a sidelong glance at his brother. Both maintained silence.

"Yes, by the way,"—began Nikolái Petróvitch, being, evidently, desirous of changing the conversation,—"I have received a letter from Kolyázin."

"From Matvyéi Ílitch?"

"Yes. He has come to * * * to inspect the Government. He has become a big-wig now, and writes to me that, as a relation, he wishes to see us, and he invites thee and me and Arkády to the town."

"Wilt thou go?"—asked Pável Petróvitch.

"No;—and thou?"

"And I shall not go, either. What do I want to drag myself fifty versts for, to eat potato-flour pudding. Mathieu wants to exhibit himself to us in all his glory. Devil take him! the gubernatorial incense will be enough for him; he 'll get along without us. And a Privy Councillor is not such a great dignitary, after all! If I had remained in the service, if I had gone on tugging away at that stupid hauling-collar, I should have been an adjutant-general by this time. And thou and I are people who are behind the times, to boot."

"Yes, brother, evidently it is time for us to order our coffins, and cross our hands upon our breasts for the grave,"—remarked Nikolái Petróvitch, with a sigh.

"Well, I shall not give in so promptly,"—muttered his brother.—"We shall have a fight yet with that medical man, I foresee that."

The fight took place that very day, at evening tea. Pável Petróvitch entered the drawing-room all ready for the fray, irritated and with his mind made up. He was merely awaiting a pretext in order to hurl himself upon the enemy, but for a long time, no pretext presented itself. Bazároff, in general, had little to say in the presence of "the old Kirsánoffs" (that was what he called the two brothers), but on that evening he felt out of sorts, and gulped down cup after cup in silence. Pável Petróvitch was all afire with impatience; at last his desire was realised.

The conversation turned upon one of the neighbouring landed proprietors.—"Rubbish, a trashy, would-be little aristocrat," indifferently remarked Bazároff, who had met him in Petersburg.

"Permit me to ask you,"—began Pável Petróvitch, and his lips quivered:—"According to your ideas, do the words 'rubbish' and 'aristocrat' signify one and the same thing?"

"I said 'trashy. would-be little aristocrat,'"—

said Bazároff, lazily swallowing a mouthful of tea.

"Exactly so, sir; but I assume that you hold the same opinion concerning the aristocrats that you do concerning the trashy, would-be little aristocrats. I consider it my duty to inform you that I do not share that view. I take the liberty of saying that every one knows me to be a liberal man and one who loves progress; but, precisely for that reason, I respect the aristocrats—the genuine ones. Remember, my dear sir" (at these words, Bazároff raised his eyes to Pável Petróvitch)—"remember, my dear sir," he repeated, with exasperation:—"the English aristocrats. They do not abate one iota of their rights, and therefore they respect the rights of others; they demand the fulfilment of obligations toward themselves, and therefore they themselves fulfil *their* duties. The aristocracy has given freedom to England, and it maintains it."

"We've heard that tune a great many times," —retorted Bazároff:—"but what are you undertaking to prove by this?"

"By *this* I am undertaking to prove, my dear sir" (when Pável Petróvitch was angry, he intentionally said "éftim" and "éfto,"[1] although he knew perfectly well that the grammar does not admit such words. In this freak, the relics of a

[1] Instead of: *éto* (this) and *étim* (by this)—*i.e.*, employing the forms in use among the peasants.—TRANSLATOR.

tradition of the epoch of Alexander manifested itself. The big-wigs of that time, on rare occasions, when talking in their native tongue, were in the habit of using, some *éfto,* others *éxhto:* as much as to say: "We are thorough-going Russians, and, at the same time, we are grandees who are permitted to scorn rules of school") —"by *this* [*éftim*] I mean to prove that, without a sense of one's own dignity, without respect for one's self,—and in the aristocrat these sentiments are developed,—there is no stable foundation for the public . . . *bien public* . . . the social structure. The individuality, my dear sir,—that is the principal thing: the human individuality must be strong as a rock, for on it everything is erected. I know very well, for example, that you see fit to regard as ridiculous my habits, my toilet, my cleanliness, to sum it up; but all that proceeds from a sense of self-respect, from a sense of duty,—yes, sir, yes, sir, of duty. I live in the country, in the wilds, but I do not neglect myself, I respect the man in myself."

"Pardon me, Pável Petróvitch,"—said Bazároff:—"here you are, respecting yourself, and sitting with folded hands: where is the good of that for the *bien public?* You would do the same thing, even if you did not respect yourself."

Pável Petróvitch turned pallid.—"That is an entirely different question. I am not in the least bound to explain to you, now, why I sit with

folded hands, as you are pleased to express yourself. I merely wish to say that aristocracy is a princíple, and only immoral or frivolous people can live in our day without princíples. I said that to Arkády the day after his arrival, and I now repeat it to you. Is not that so, Nikolái?"

Nikolái Petróvitch nodded his head.

"Aristocracy, liberalism, progress, principles," —Bazároff was saying in the meantime:—"when you come to think of it, how many foreign . . . . and useless words! The Russian man does not need them, even as a gift."

"What does he need, according to you? To hear you, one would suppose that we were outside the pale of humanity, outside its laws. Good heavens! the logic of history demands . . . . .

"But what do you want with that logic? We can get along without it."

"How so?"

"Why, in this way: you need no logic, I hope, in order to put a piece of bread into your mouth when you are hungry. What use have we for these abstractions?"

Pável Petróvitch waved his hands in despair.—"I do not understand you, after that. You are insulting the Russian nation. I do not understand how it is possible not to recognise princíples and rules? By force of what do you act?"

"I have already told you, dear uncle, that we recognise no authorities,"—put in Arkády.

"We act by force of that which we recognise as useful,"—said Bazároff.—"At the present time, the most useful thing of all is rejection—we reject."

"Everything?"

"Everything."

"What? Not only art, poetry . . . but also . . . it is terrible to utter it . . . ."

"Everything,"—repeated Bazároff, with inexpressible composure.

Pável Petróvitch stared at him. He had not expected this, and Arkády fairly flushed crimson with delight.

"But pardon me,"—began Nikolái Petróvitch. "You reject everything, or, to speak more accurately, you demolish everything. . . . But surely, it is necessary to build up also."

"That 's no affair of ours. . . The place must first be cleared."

"The contemporary condition of the populace demands this,"—added Arkády, with importance:—"we must comply with that demand; we have no right to devote ourselves to the gratification of our personal egoism."

The last phrase, evidently, did not please Bazároff; it smacked of philosophy,—that is to say, of romanticism,—for Bazároff called philosophy also romanticism, but he did not consider it necessary to contradict his young disciple.

"No, no!"—exclaimed Pável Petróvitch,

with a sudden impetuosity: — "I will not believe that you, gentlemen, are accurately acquainted with the Russian people; that you are representatives of its requirements, its aspirations! No, the Russian people is not what you imagine it to be. It sacredly respects tradition, it is patriarchal, it cannot live without faith. . ."

"I will not dispute that!"—interrupted Bazároff;—"I am even prepared to agree that, *in that respect,* you are right. . ."

"But if I am right . . ."

"Still, that proves nothing."

"Precisely, it proves nothing," — repeated Arkády, with the confidence of an expert chess-player who has foreseen his adversary's apparently expert move, and hence is not in the least disconcerted.

"Why does it prove nothing?" — muttered the astounded Pável Petróvitch. "Do you mean to say that you are marching against your people?"

"And what if I am?"—exclaimed Bazároff. "The people assume that when the thunder rumbles it is the prophet Elijah driving across the sky in his chariot. What then? Am I bound to agree with them? And, moreover, they are Russians, and am not I a Russian myself?"

"No, you are not a Russian, after all you have just said! I cannot acknowledge you as a Russian"

"My grandfather tilled the soil,"—replied Bazároff, with haughty pride.—"Ask any one of your peasants, in which of us—in you or in me—he would the more readily recognise a fellow-countryman. You do not even know how to talk with him."

"But you talk with him, and despise him, at one and the same time."

"What of that, if he deserves to be despised? You censure my tendency, but who told you that it is accidental in my case; that it is not evoked by that same spirit of the people in the name of which you wage war?"

"The idea! Much need there is of nihilists!"

"Whether there is need for them or not, is not for us to decide. Assuredly, you consider yourself not devoid of usefulness."

"Gentlemen, gentlemen, please refrain from personalities!" exclaimed Nikolái Petróvitch, half-rising from his seat.

Pável Petróvitch smiled, and laying his hand on his brother's shoulder, he made him sit down again.—"Don't worry,"—he said.—I shall not forget myself, precisely because of that sense of dignity at which Mr. . . . Mr. Doctor jeers so savagely. Pardon me,"—he went on, addressing himself once more to Bazároff:—"perhaps you think your doctrine is a novelty? You are mistaken in thinking so. The materialism which you preach has been in vogue more than once

already, and has always shown itself to be inadequate. . . ."

"Another foreign word!"—interrupted Bazároff. He was beginning to get angry, and his countenance assumed a sort of coarse, brazen hue.—"In the first place, we are not preaching anything; that is not our habit. . . ."

"What do you do, then?"

"This is what we do. Formerly, in days which are not yet remote, we were accustomed to say that our officials took bribes; that we had no roads, no trade, no regular courts of justice. . ."

"Well, yes, yes, you are accusers,—I believe that is what it is called. And with many of your accusations I agree, but . . . ."

"But, later on, it dawned upon us that it was not worth while to prate, and do nothing but prate, about our ulcers; that that led only to trivialities and doctrinairism; we perceived that our clever men, the so-called leading men and accusers, were good for nothing, that we were busying ourselves with nonsense, talking about some sort of art, about unconscious creation, about parliamentarism, about advocateship, and the devil knows what else, when it was a question of daily bread, when the crudest superstition was stifling us, when all our stock companies were failing simply through the lack of honest men, when the very liberty which the Government is working over is hardly likely to be of

any use to us, because our peasant is ready to rob himself, if only he may drink himself dead drunk in the pot-house."

"Exactly,"—interrupted Pável Petróvitch,—"exactly so: you have become convinced of all this, and have made up your minds not to set about anything seriously."

"And have decided not to set about anything,"— repeated Bazároff grimly. He suddenly became vexed with himself for having been so expansive in the presence of this gentleman.

"And only to rail?"

"Yes, only to rail."

"And that is called nihilism?"

"And that is called nihilism,"—repeated Bazároff once more, this time with peculiar insolence.

Pável Petróvitch narrowed his eyes slightly.

"So that 's the way the wind blows!"—he said, in a strangely quiet voice.—"Nihilism is bound to aid every woe, and you, you are our deliverers and heroes. But for what do you take others,—those same deliverers, for example? Do not you prate, like all the rest?"

"We are guilty in some other respects, but not of that sin,"—articulated Bazároff through his teeth.

"What, then? Do you do anything, pray? Are you preparing to act?"

Bazároff made no reply. Pável Petróvitch

was fairly quivering, but he immediately regained control of himself.

"H'm! . . . To act, to demolish . . . ." he continued.—"But why demolish without even knowing the reason?"

"We demolish because we are a force,"—remarked Arkády.

Pável Petróvitch looked at his nephew, and laughed.

"Yes, a force,—and a force, as such, does not render an account of itself,"—said Arkády, and straightened himself up.

"Unhappy man,"—roared Pável Petróvitch; he positively was not able to restrain himself any longer:—"thou mightest take into consideration what it is in Russia that thou art upholding by thy trivial judgment! No, this is enough to make an angel lose patience! Force! There is force in the savage Kalmýk, and in the Mongolian also, but what is that to us?—Civilisation is dear to us,—yes, sir, yes, my dear sir, its fruits are dear to us. And do not tell me that those fruits are insignificant: the most wretched dauber, *un barbouilleur*, a player of dance-music who is paid five kopéks an evening,—all of them are more useful than you, because they are representatives of civilisation, and not of crude Mongolian force! You imagine that you are leaders, but the only proper place for you is in a Kalmýk tent! A force! But pray recollect, in conclusion, you

forceful gentlemen, that there are only four men and a half of you, but there are millions of those who will not permit you to trample under foot their most sacred beliefs, who will crush you!"

"If they crush us, there lies the road,"—said Bazároff.—"Only, that question has not yet been decided. We are not so few in number as you suppose."

"What? Jesting aside, do you think you will be able to manage things; that you are more than a match for the whole nation?"

"Moscow was burned to the ground by a farthing candle, you know,"—replied Bazároff.

"Precisely, precisely. First an almost satanic pride, then derision. That—that is what seduces the young generation, that is what subjugates the inexperienced hearts of wretched little boys! Look! there sits one of them by your side; you see that he is almost worshipping you; admire him." (Arkády turned aside and frowned.) "And this infection is already widely disseminated. I am told that our artists in Rome never set foot inside the Vatican. They regard Raphael as almost a fool, because, forsooth, he is an authority; but they themselves are disgustingly impotent and sterile, and their imagination goes no further than 'A Girl at the Fountain,' say what you will! And the girl is very badly painted, to boot. They are fine fellows in your opinion, are n't they?"

"In my opinion,"—retorted Bazároff:—"Raphael is n't worth a copper farthing; and they are better than he!"

"Bravo! bravo! Listen, Arkády . . . . that 's the way young men of the present day ought to express themselves! And, when you come to think of it, how can they help following you! In former days, young folks had to study; they did not care to bear the reputation of ignoramuses, so they worked, willy-nilly. But now, all they have to do is to say: 'Everything in the world is nonsense!'—and that 's the end of the matter. The young folks are overjoyed. And, in fact, formerly they were simply blockheads, but now they have suddenly become nihilists."

"That 's where your boasted sense of personal dignity has fooled you,"—remarked Bazároff coolly, while Arkády flared up, and his eyes flashed.—"Our dispute has gone too far. . . I think it would be better to put an end to it. And I shall be ready to agree with you,"—he added, rising,—"when you can bring forward a single institution of our contemporary existence, either domestic or social, which does not challenge total rejection."

"I will present to you millions of such institutions,"—exclaimed Pável Petróvitch:—"millions! Why, take the commune, for example."

A cold sneer curled Bazároff's lips.—"Well, so far as the commune is concerned,"—said he:—

" you had better talk with your brother. I think he has now found out, in practice, what the commune is like: thorough security, sobriety, and all that sort of thing."

" The family, then,—the family, as it exists among our peasants!"—shouted Pável Petróvitch.

" That question, also, I think, it would be better for you not to inquire into in detail. You have heard, I fancy, of men making love to their sons' wives? Listen to me, Pável Petróvitch: give yourself a couple of days of grace; it is n't likely that you will be able to find anything on the spot. Sort over all classes of our society, and meditate well over each one, and, in the meantime, Arkády and I will . . ."

" Sneer at everything,"—put in Pável Petróvitch.

" No, cut up frogs. Come on, Arkády; farewell for the present, gentlemen!"

The two friends quitted the room. The brothers were left alone, and, at first, they merely stared at each other.

" There,"—began Pável Petróvitch at last:—" there 's the youth of the present day for you! There they are—our heirs!"

" Our heirs,"—repeated Nikolái Petróvitch, with a sigh of depression. He had been sitting on hot coals, as it were, during the whole course of

the dispute, and had merely cast furtive, pained glances at Arkády.—"Dost thou know, brother, what has recurred to my mind? One day, I quarrelled with our deceased mother: she screamed, and would not listen to me . . . At last I said to her,—'You cannot understand me,' said I: 'we belong to two different generations,' said I. She was frightfully angry, and I thought to myself: What is to be done? The pill is bitter—but it must be swallowed. So now, our turn has come, and our successors can say to us: 'You are not of our generation—swallow the pill.'"

"Thou art too kind-hearted and modest,"—returned Pável Petróvitch;—"on the contrary, I am convinced that thou and I are far more in the right than those little gentlemen, although we express ourselves, perhaps, in somewhat antiquated language, have *vielli*, and do not possess that audacious self-conceit. . . And how puffed up the young people of the present day are! Ask one of them: 'What wine do you prefer, red or white?'—'I am accustomed to prefer red!' he replies in a bass voice, and with as pompous a visage, as though the whole universe were gazing at him at the moment. . ."

"Would not you like some more tea?"—said Fénitchka, sticking her head in at the door: she had not been able to bring herself to enter the

drawing-room while the voices of the disputants were resounding there.

"No, thou mayest give orders to have the samovár removed,"—replied Nikolái Petróvitch, rising to greet her. Pável Petróvitch abruptly wished him "*Bon soir,*" and went off to his own study.

XI

Half an hour later, Nikolái Petróvitch betook himself to the garden, to his favourite arbour. Melancholy thoughts had taken possession of him. For the first time he clearly realised the breach between himself and his son; he had a foreboding that with every passing day it would become wider and wider. So it was in vain that he had sat, at Petersburg, over the newest books, during the winter; in vain had he listened to the conversations of the young men; in vain had he rejoiced when he had succeeded in interpolating a remark of his own into their fervent speeches. "My brother says that we are in the right," he thought; "and setting aside all self-conceit, it seems to me, also, that they are further from the truth than we are; and, at the same time, I feel that they have something which we do not possess, some superiority over us. . . Youth? No: it is not youth alone. Does not their superiority consist in the fact, that in them there are fewer traces of the gentry régime than in us?"

Nikolái Petróvitch hung his head, and passed his hand over his face.

"But must one reject poetry?"—he said to

himself again: "is one to feel no sympathy for art, for nature? . . ."

And he cast a glance around him, as though desirous of understanding how it was possible not to feel sympathy for nature. The shades of twilight were already beginning to descend; the sun had hidden itself behind a small aspen grove, which lay half a verst distant from the garden; its shadow stretched out illimitably across the motionless fields. A peasant was riding at a gallop on a white horse, along the dark, narrow road which skirted the edge of the grove: his whole figure was clearly visible, everything about him, down to the patch on his shoulder, in spite of the fact that he was riding in the shadow; the hoofs of the horse flashed out with pleasing distinctness. The rays of the sun, on their side, made their way into the grove, and piercing through the thickets, flooded the boles of the trees with so warm a glow, that these were made to resemble the boles of pine-trees, while their foliage turned almost blue, and above it rose the pale azure sky, faintly crimsoned by the sunset. The swallows were flying high; the breeze had completely died down; belated bees hummed languidly and sleepily in the lilac blossoms; midges hovered in a pillar above an isolated, far-outstretching branch. "My God, how beautiful!" thought Nikolái Petróvitch, and his favourite verses were on the point of springing to his lips: he recalled Arkády,—"Stoff

und Kraft "—and fell silent, but continued to sit on, continued to surrender himself to the sad and cheering play of his solitary meditations. He loved to meditate; country life had developed in him this capacity. It was not so very long since he had meditated as he waited for his son at the posting-station, and since then a change had taken place, and their relations, which had still been ill-defined at that time, had become clearly defined . . . . and in what a way! Again his deceased wife presented herself to him, but not as he had known her during the course of many years,—not as a thrifty, kind housewife, but as a young girl with a slender form, an innocently-inquiring glance, and her hair closely coiled on her childish neck. He recalled her as he had beheld her for the first time. He was a student then. He had met her on the staircase of the lodgings in which he lived, and, unintentionally, he had jostled her, had turned round, had endeavoured to excuse himself, and had only been able to stammer, *"Pardon, monsieur,"* while she had bent her head, had laughed, and then, suddenly, had seemed to take fright, and had fled; but at the turn of the staircase she had thrown a glance backward at him, had assumed a serious mien, and had blushed. And then, the first timid visits, the half-words, the half-smiles, and the awkwardness, and the sadness, and the outbursts, and, at last, that panting joy. . . Whither had all that whirled

away? She had become his wife; he had been happy as few on earth are happy. . . " But," he thought:—"those delightful first moments;—why could not they live forever, with life immortal?"

He did not attempt to elucidate his thought to himself, but he was conscious that he would have liked to hold fast to that blissful time by something more forcible than memory; he would have liked to possess once more tangible evidence of his Márya's nearness, to feel her warmth and her breath; and he had already begun to fancy that, above him . . . . .

" Nikolái Petróvitch,"—resounded Fénitchka's voice near him:—" where are you?"

He shuddered. He was neither pained nor conscience-stricken. . . He did not even admit the possibility of a comparison between his wife and Fénitchka, but he regretted that she had taken a notion to hunt him up. Her voice instantaneously reminded him of his grey hair, his advanced age, his present . . . .

The world of enchantment, into which he had already entered, which had sprung forth from the misty waves of the past, trembled,—and vanished.

" I am here,"—he replied: " I will come; go along." " Here are traces of the old gentry régime," flashed through his mind. Fénitchka peeped silently at him in the arbour, and disappeared; and he noticed, with surprise, that night had descended since he had begun to meditate.

Everything had grown dark and silent round about, and Fénitchka's face flitted before him, very white and small. He half-rose from his seat, and was about to set out homeward; but his softened heart would not calm down in his breast, and he began to stroll slowly about the garden, now thoughtfully staring at the ground beneath his feet, now raising his eyes to the sky, where the stars were swarming and twinkling. He walked for a long time, almost to fatigue, and still the tumult within him, a sort of importunate, undefined, melancholy tumult, did not subside. Oh, how Bazároff would have laughed at him, had he known what was going on within him then! Arkády himself would have condemned him. Tears, causeless tears, welled up in his eyes—in the eyes of the agriculturist and estate-owner; this was a hundredfold worse than the violoncello.

Nikolái Petróvitch continued to walk, and could not bring himself to enter the house, that peaceful and cosey nest, which gazed with such welcome at him from all its illuminated windows; he was not able to tear himself away from the darkness, from the garden, from the feeling of the cool air on his face, and from that sadness, that agitation . . . .

At a turn in the path, Pável Petróvitch met him.

"What is the matter with thee?"—he asked Nikolái Petróvitch:—"thou art as pale as a

ghost; thou art not well; why dost not thou go to bed?"

Nikolái Petróvitch explained to him, in brief words, his spiritual condition, and walked on. Pável Petróvitch went to the end of the garden, and he also became thoughtful, and he also raised his eyes to heaven. But in his fine, dark eyes there was nothing reflected except the light of the stars. He had not been born romantic, and his elegantly-dry and passionate soul, misanthropic after the French fashion, did not know how to meditate. . . .

"Dost thou know what?" said Bazároff to Arkády, that same night.—"A magnificent idea has come into my head. Thy father said, to-day, that he had received an invitation from that distinguished relative of yours. Thy father will not go; let 's flit off, thou and I, to * * * ; that gentleman has invited thee also, thou knowest. For thou seest what sort of weather has set in here; but we will have a drive, we 'll take a look at the town. We 'll lounge about five or six days, and —*basta!*"

"And wilt thou return here from there?"

"No, I must go to my father. Thou knowest he is thirty versts from * * *. I have not seen him for a long time, nor my mother either; I must comfort the old folks. They are good people, especially my father: he 's very amusing. And I 'm their only child."

"And wilt thou remain long with them?"

"I think not. I shall be bored, I fancy."

"And wilt thou drop in to see us on thy way back?"

"I don't know. . . . I shall see. Come, how is it to be? Shall we go?"

"If thou wishest,"—remarked Arkády lazily.

At heart, he was greatly delighted at his friend's proposal, but he considered himself bound to conceal his feeling. Not for nothing was he a nihilist.

On the following day, he drove off with Bazároff to * * *. The young people at Márino regretted their departure; Dunyásha even fell to weeping . . . but the older men breathed more freely.

XII

The town of * * *, whither our friends had betaken themselves, lay in the jurisdiction of a governor who belonged to the younger generation, was progressive and a despot, as is often the case in Russia. In the course of the first year of his rule, he managed to quarrel, not only with the Marshal of the Nobility for the Government, a retired staff-captain of cavalry in the Guards, a horse-breeder and hospitable man, but also with his own officials. The altercations which arose in consequence finally attained to such dimensions that the Ministry in Petersburg found it indispensable to send a confidential person with a commission to investigate everything on the spot. The choice of the administration fell upon Matvyéi Ílitch Kolyázin, the son of that Kolyázin under whose protection the Kirsánoff brothers had once been. He, also, was one of the "young generation," that is to say, he had only recently passed his fortieth birthday; but he was already aiming to become a statesman, and wore a star on each side of his breast. One, to tell the truth, was of a foreign Order, and of a petty Order, at that. Like the Governor, whom he had come to judge,

he regarded himself as progressive, and, being already a big-wig, did not resemble the majority of big-wigs. He cherished the loftiest opinion of himself; his vanity knew no bounds; but he bore himself simply, his gaze was approving, he listened affably and smiled so good-naturedly that, at first sight, he might have passed for a "splendid fellow." But, on important occasions, he knew how to kick up a row, as the expression goes. "Energy is indispensable,"—he was wont to say then,—"*l'energie est la première qualité d'un homme d'état*"; but, notwithstanding this, he generally got left in the lurch, and any official who was in the least degree experienced rode him at will. Matvyéi Ílitch referred with great respect to Guizot, and tried to impress upon all and sundry that he did not belong to the class of routine men, and bureaucrats, who were behind the times, that he let not a single important phenomenon of social life escape his attention. . . All such words were well known to him. He even watched, with careless haughtiness, it is true, the development of contemporary literature: like a grown man who, on encountering upon the street a procession of small boys, sometimes joins their ranks. In reality, Matvyéi Ílitch had not got very far away from those statesmen of the epoch of Alexander, who, when preparing to spend the evening with Madame Svetchín, who then resided in Petersburg, were accustomed to

read a page of Condillac in the morning: only, his methods were different—more modern. He was a clever courtier, a very artful blade, and nothing more; he did not understand business, he had no mind, but he knew how to manage his own affairs; no one could saddle and ride him in that quarter, and that is the chief thing, after all.

Matvyéi Ílitch received Arkády with the affability peculiar to an enlightened dignitary,—we will say more: with playfulness. Nevertheless, he was amazed when he learned that the relatives whom he had invited had remained in the country. "Thy papa was always a queer fish," he remarked, twirling the tassels of his magnificent velvet dressing-gown; and, all at once, turning to a young official in the most well-intentioned, closely-buttoned undress-uniform, he exclaimed, with an anxious aspect, "What?" The young man, whose lips were glued fast together through prolonged silence, rose, and stared at his superior with surprise. But, after having stunned his subordinate, Matvyéi Ílitch paid no further attention to him. Our officials, in general, are fond of stunning their subordinates, and the means to which they resort for the attainment of this end are decidedly varied. The following method, among others, is frequently employed,—" is quite a favourite," as the English say: the dignitary suddenly ceases to understand the most simple

words, deafness descends upon him. He will ask, for example: "What day is to-day?"

He is informed, in the most respectful manner: "To-day is Friday, your 'c . . c'len . . . cy."

"How? What? What do you mean by Friday? What Friday?"

"Friday, your 'c . . . . ccc . . . ccc . . . . . lency, is a day of the week."

"Come, now, hast thou taken it into thy head to teach me?"

Matvyéi Ílitch was a dignitary, all the same, although he considered himself a liberal.

"I advise thee, my friend, to call upon the Governor,"—he said to Arkády:—"thou understandest, I give thee this advice, not because I am wedded to antique conceptions as to the necessity of going and making one's bow to the powers that be, but simply because the Governor is a nice man; moreover, thou art, probably, desirous of making acquaintance with the local society. . . For thou art not a bear, I hope? And he is going to give a great ball the day after to-morrow."

"Shall you be at the ball?"—inquired Arkády.

"He is giving it in my honour,"—said Matvyéi Ílitch, almost with compunction. "Dost thou dance?"

"Yes, but badly."

"That is a mistake. There are pretty women here, and it is a shame for a young man not to dance. And again, I say this not in virtue of an-

tique ideas; I do not, in the least, assume that the brain must be located in the feet, but Byronism is ridiculous, *il a fait son temps.*"

"Why, uncle, it is not in the least because of Byronism that I . . . . . "

"I will introduce thee to the young ladies here, I will take thee under my wing,"—interrupted Matvyéi Ílitch, and laughed in a self-satisfied way. "Thou wilt find it warm, hey?"

A servant entered and announced the arrival of the chairman of the Court of Exchequer, a soft-eyed old man, with wrinkled lips, who was extremely fond of nature, especially on a summer day, when, according to his words, "every little bee takes a bribe from every little blossom. . . " Arkády withdrew.

He found Bazároff in the inn where they had put up, and tried for a long time to persuade him to go to the Governor. "There 's nothing to be done!" said Bazároff at last,—"as you have made your bed, so you must lie upon it. We have come to inspect the landed gentry, so let 's inspect them!"

The Governor received the young men courteously, but did not invite them to sit down, and did not sit down himself. He was forever bustling and hurrying; he donned his tight undress-uniform in the morning, and an excessively tight neck-cloth, never ate or drank his fill, was forever giving orders. He had been nicknamed

in the Government "Bourdaloue," the allusion not being to the famous French preacher, but to *burdá*.[1] He invited Kirsánoff and Bazároff to his ball, and a couple of minutes later he invited them a second time, under the impression that they were brothers, and calling them "Kaisároff."

They were on their way home from the Governor's when, suddenly, from one of the passing drozhkies there sprang out a man of short stature, in a Slavyanophil hussar jacket, and with the shout, "Evgény Vasílitch!" flung himself on Bazároff.

"Ah! so it 's you, Herr Sítnikoff,"—said Bazároff, and he continued to stride along the sidewalk:—"how do you happen to be here?"

"Just imagine! quite by accident,"—replied the other, and, turning toward the drozhky, he waved his hand five times, and shouted: "Follow us, follow us! My father has business here,"—he went on, as he sprang across the gutter:—"well, and so he invited me. . . . I learned to-day of your arrival, and have already been to see you." (In fact, the friends, on their return to their room, found there a card with the corners turned down, and the name of Sítnikoff in French on one side and in Slavonic script on the other.) "I hope you are not coming from the Governor?"

"Do not hope,—we are straight from him."

[1] A bad, muddy beverage.—TRANSLATOR.

"Ah! in that case I shall call upon him also. . . Evgény Vasílitch, introduce me to your . . . to him. . ."

"Sítnikoff—Kirsánoff,"—growled Bazároff, without halting.

"I feel greatly flattered,"—began Sítnikoff, walking sideways, grinning, and hastily pulling off his far too elegant gloves.—"I have heard a great deal . . . . I am an old acquaintance of Evgény Vasílitch, and, I may say, his disciple. I am indebted to him for my regeneration. . . . ."

Arkády looked at Bazároff's disciple. An agitated and stupid expression lay upon the small but agreeable features of his smoothly-licked face; his small eyes, which had the appearance of being crushed in, stared intently and uneasily, and he laughed uneasily, with a sort of curt, wooden laugh.

"Would you believe it,"—he went on: "that when Evgény Vasílitch said, for the first time, in my presence, that one ought not to respect the authorities, I experienced such rapture . . . . I fairly seemed to have recovered my sight! Here, said I to myself, I have found a man, at last! By the way, Evgény Vasílitch, you must, without fail, call on one of the ladies here, who is thoroughly in a position to understand you, and for whom your visit will constitute a veritable festival; you have heard of her, I think?"

"Who is she?"—articulated Bazároff unwillingly.

"Madame Kukshín, Eudoxie,—Evdóksiya Kukshín. She is a remarkable nature, *emancipée* in the true sense of the word, a leading woman. Do you know what? Let 's go to her now, all together. She lives a couple of paces from here. We will breakfast there. You have not breakfasted yet, of course?"

"Not yet."

"Well, that 's fine. She has separated from her husband, you understand; she is not dependent on anybody."

"Is she pretty?" interrupted Bazároff.

"N . . . no, I cannot say that she is."

"Then, why the devil do you invite us to go to her?"

"Well, you jester, you jester! . . . She will set us up a bottle of champagne."

"You don't say so! The practical man is visible at once. By the way, is your father still engaged in revenue-farming?"

"Yes,"—said Sítnikoff hastily, and emitted a shrill laugh. "Well, how is it to be? Is it a go?"

"I really do not know."

"Thou hast desired to observe people, so go,"—remarked Arkády in an undertone.

"But what of you, Mr. Kirsánoff?" interposed Sítnikoff. "Pray come also; we cannot get along without you."

"But how can we all descend upon her at once?"

"Never mind. Kukshína[1] is a splendid fellow."

"Will there be a bottle of champagne?" inquired Bazároff.

"Three bottles!" exclaimed Sítnikoff.—"I guarantee that."

"How?"

"By my own head."

"By your father's purse would be better. However, we will go."

[1] The feminine form of the surname, without prefix, is sometimes used, as well as the masculine.—TRANSLATOR.

XIII

The tiny house of nobility, after the Moscow fashion, in which dwelt Avdótya [1] Nikítishna, or Evdóksiya Kukshín, was situated on one of the recently-burned streets of the town of * * *; (it is a well-known fact that our provincial capitals burn down every five years). At the door, over a visiting-card nailed up askew, the bell-handle was visible, and in the anteroom the visitors were met by a woman, who was either a servant or a companion, in a cap,—plain tokens of the house-mistress's progressive tendencies. Sítnikoff inquired whether Avdótya Nikítishna was at home.

"Is that you, Victór?"—rang out a shrill voice from the adjoining room.—"Come in."

The woman in the cap immediately vanished.

"I am not alone,"—said Sítnikoff, briskly flinging aside his Hungarian cloak, under which appeared something in the nature of a waistcoat, or a sack-coat, and casting a daring glance at Arkády and Bazároff.

"No matter,"—replied the voice.—*"Entrez!"*

The young men entered. The room in which they found themselves resembled a working-

[1] Avdótya is the vulgar, popular form of Evdóksiya.—Translator.

study rather than a drawing-room. Documents, letters, thick numbers of Russian journals, chiefly uncut, were scattered about on the dusty tables; everywhere the discarded butts of cigarettes gleamed whitely. On the leather couch half-reclined a lady, young, fair-haired, rather dishevelled, in a silk gown which was not quite clean, with big bracelets on her short arms, and a lace kerchief on her head. She rose from the divan, and carelessly drawing up on her shoulders a velvet cloak lined with ermine which had grown yellow, she languidly said, "Good morning, Victór," and shook Sítnikoff by the hand.

"Bazároff, Kirsánoff,"—said he abruptly, in imitation of Bazároff.

"You are welcome,"—replied Madame Kukshín; and riveting upon Bazároff her round eyes, between which, like an orphan, her tiny, snub nose gleamed redly, she added:—"I know you,"—and shook hands with him also.

Bazároff knit his brows. There was nothing monstrous about the tiny and homely figure of the emancipated woman; but the expression of her face had an unpleasant effect on the spectator. One involuntarily wanted to ask her: "What 's the matter? Art thou hungry? or bored? or afraid? Why art thou so gloomy?" Her soul, like that of Sítnikoff, was always aching. She talked and moved in a very free-and-easy way, but, at the same time, awkwardly: evidently

she regarded herself as a good-natured and simple being, and yet, no matter what she did, it constantly seemed to you that that was not precisely what she meant; everything turned out with her, as the children say, done "on purpose"—that is to say, not simply, not naturally.

"Yes, yes, I know you, Bazároff,"—she repeated. (She had a habit, peculiar to many provincial and Moscow ladies, of calling men by their surnames on first acquaintance.) "Will you have a cigar?"

"A cigar is all well enough,"—chimed in Sítnikoff, who had managed to throw himself into an arm-chair, in a lolling posture, and stick his foot up in the air:—"but pray give us some breakfast. We are frightfully hungry; and order them to set up a bottle of champagne."

"Sybarite,"—said Evdóksiya, and laughed. (When she laughed her upper gum was laid bare above her teeth.)—"He 's a Sybarite, is n't he, Bazároff?"

"I love comfort, life,"—remarked Sítnikoff pompously.—"That does not prevent my being a liberal."

"Yes, it does—it does prevent!"—exclaimed Evdóksiya; but, nevertheless, she ordered her maid-servant to attend to the breakfast and the champagne.—"What do you think about it?"—she added, addressing Bazároff.—"I am convinced that you share my opinion."

"Well, no,"—returned Bazároff:—"a piece of meat is better than a piece of bread, even from the chemical point of view."

"And do you occupy yourself with chemistry? It is my passion. I have even invented a mastic myself."

"A mastic? You?"

"Yes, I. And do you know with what object? In order to make dolls, and heads which shall not break. For I am practical too. But all is not yet ready. I must still read Liebig. By the way, have you read Kislyakóff's article about woman's work, in the *Moscow News?* Read it, please. You are interested in the woman question, of course? And in schools also? What does your friend do? What is his name?"

Madame Kukshín dropped all her questions, one after another, with enervated carelessness, without waiting for answers; spoiled children talk to their nurses in the same way.

"My name is Arkády Nikoláevitch Kirsánoff,"—said Arkády:—"and I do nothing."

Evdóksiya laughed aloud.—"Is n't that nice? What, don't you smoke? Victór, you know that I am angry with you."

"What for?"

"I hear that you have begun to praise Georges Sand again. She 's out of date, and that 's all there is about it! How is it possible to compare

her with Emerson! She has no ideas whatever as to education, or physiology, or anything. I am convinced that she never even heard of embryology; and in our time—how can you get along without that?" (Evdóksiya even flung her hands apart.) "Akh, what a wonderful article Elisyévitch has written on that subject! He is a talented gentleman." (Evdóksiya constantly used the word "gentleman" instead of "man.")—"Bazároff, sit down beside me on the divan. Perhaps you do not know that I am frightfully afraid of you."

"Why so, permit me to inquire."

"You are a dangerous gentleman; you are such a critic. Akh, my God! I am ridiculous, I am talking like some landed proprietress on the steppe. However, I really am a landed proprietress. I manage my own estate, and just imagine! my superintendent, Eroféi, is a wonderful type, just like Cooper's Pathfinder: there is something direct about him. I have settled down here for good. The town is intolerable, is n't it? But what is one to do?"

"The town is just like the average town,"—remarked Bazároff coolly.

"All the interests are so petty,—that is what is so dreadful! I used to live in Moscow during the winter . . . but now my spouse, M'sieu Kukshín, lives there. And then, too, Moscow is now . . . I

don't know what,—but not what it should be. I think of going abroad; I was on the very point of going last year."

"To Paris, of course?"—asked Bazároff.

"To Paris, and to Heidelberg."

"Why to Heidelberg?"

"Good gracious!—why, Bunsen is there."

Bazároff found no answer to this.

"Pierre Sapózhnikoff . . . do you know him?"

"No, I do not."

"Good gracious!—Pierre Sapózhnikoff . . he 's forever at Lydie Khostátoff's house."

"I do not know her, either."

"Well, he offered to escort me. Thank God, I am free, I have no children. . . What was that I said: *thank God!*—However, it makes no difference."

Evdóksiya rolled a cigarette with her fingers which were stained brown with tobacco, passed her tongue across it, sucked it, and lighted it. A maid-servant entered with a tray.

"Ah, here is breakfast! Will you have some appetiser? Victór, uncork the bottle. That 's in your line."

"It is, it is,"—murmured Sítnikoff, and again he laughed shrilly.

"Are there pretty women here?"—inquired Bazároff, as he drained his third glass.

"Yes,"—replied Evdóksiya:—"but they are all such empty-headed things. For instance, *mon*

amie, Madame Odíntzoff, is n't bad-looking. It 's a pity that her reputation is rather . . . . But that would be nothing, only she has no freedom of views, no breadth, no . . . . you know what. The whole system of education must be changed. I have already given thought to that subject; our women are very badly brought up."

" You can do nothing with them,"—interposed Sítnikoff.—" One must scorn them, and I do scorn them, wholly and completely!" (The possibility of scorning and expressing his scorn was a most agreeable sensation for Sítnikoff; he attacked women in particular, without a suspicion that, a few months later, he was doomed to cringe before his own wife, merely because she had been born a Princess Durdoleósoff.)—" Not one of them has ever been in a condition to comprehend our conversation; not one of them is worth it—that we, serious men, should talk about her!"

" And they have no need whatever to comprehend our conversation,"—said Bazároff.

" Of whom are you speaking?"—put in Evdóksiya.

" Of pretty women."

" What? So you share the opinion of Prud'hon?"

Bazároff drew himself up haughtily. " I share no one's opinions: I have my own."

" Down with authority!"—shouted Sítnikoff, delighted at the opportunity to express himself

harshly in the presence of a man before whom he cringed.

"But Macaulay himself . . ." began Madame Kukshín. . .

"Down with Macaulay!"—thundered Sítnikoff.—"Do you stand up for those mean peasant women?"

"Not for the peasant women, but for the rights of women, whom I have sworn to defend to the last drop of my blood."

"Down with them!"—But here Sítnikoff came to a halt.—"But I do not deny them,"—said he.

"Yes, I see that you are a Slavyanophil!"

"No, I am not a Slavyanophil, although, of course . . . ."

"Yes, yes, yes! You are a Slavyanophil! You are the continuer of 'The Household Regulations.'[1] You ought to have a whip in your hand."

"A whip is a good thing,"—remarked Bazároff: "but here we have got to the last drops. . ."

"Of what?"—interrupted Evdóksiya.

"Of the champagne, most respected Avdótya Nikítishna,—of the champagne—not of your blood."

"I cannot listen with indifference when you attack women,"—went on Evdóksiya.—"It is

[1] "The Domostróy" ("The House Regulator"; or, "The Household Regulations"): reputed to be by Priest Sylvester, the famous Confessor of Iván the Terrible in his youth. Its precepts concerning women and their treatment are of patriarchal rigour.—TRANSLATOR.

dreadful, dreadful. Instead of attacking them, you had better read Michelet's 'De l' Amour.' It 's wonderful! Gentlemen, let us talk of love," —added Evdóksiya, languidly dropping her hand on the crumpled pillow of the divan.

A sudden silence ensued.—"No, why talk about love?"—remarked Bazároff:—"but you mentioned Madame Odíntzoff a while ago—I believe that is what you called her? Who is that lady?"

"A charming, charming creature!" squeaked Sítnikoff. "I will introduce you. She is clever, wealthy, a widow. Unfortunately, she is not yet sufficiently developed. She ought to become more intimately acquainted with our Evdóksiya. I drink to your health, *Eudoxie!* Let us clink glasses! 'Et toc, et tin-tin-tin. Et toc, et toc, et tin-tin-tin!'". . . .

"Victór, you are a scapegrace."

Breakfast lasted a long time. The first bottle of champagne was followed by a second, a third, and even a fourth. . . . Evdóksiya chattered incessantly; Sítnikoff seconded her. They talked a great deal on the subjects: what is marriage—a prejudice or a crime? and how are people born —all alike or not? and in what, precisely, does individuality consist? At last, the discussion reached a point where Evdóksiya, all flushed crimson with the wine she had drunk, and tapping the keys of a discordant piano with her flat nails,

began to sing, at first gipsy songs, then the romance of Seymour-Schiff, "Sleepy Granada slumbers"; and Sítnikoff bound up his head with a scarf and represented the dying lover, at the words:

> "And melt my mouth with thine
> In a burning kiss."

At last Arkády could endure it no longer. "Gentlemen, this has come to resemble Bedlam," he remarked aloud. Bazároff, who had only interjected a sneering word now and then into the conversation,—he was mainly occupied with the champagne,—yawned loudly, rose, and without taking leave of the hostess, went away, in company with Arkády. Sítnikoff rushed after them.

"Well, what do you think,—well, what do you think?"—he kept asking, obsequiously running now to the right, now to the left:—"did n't I tell you she 's a remarkable person! We ought to have more women of that sort! In her way, she is a highly-moral phenomenon."

"And is that establishment of *thy* father a moral phenomenon also?"—said Bazároff, jerking his finger in the direction of a dram-shop which they were passing at the moment.

Again Sítnikoff emitted a squealing laugh. He was very much ashamed of his origin, and did not know whether to feel flattered or insulted by Bazároff's unexpectedly addressing him as *thou*.

XIV

A FEW days later the ball came off at the Governor's. Matvyéi Ílitch was the real "hero of the festival"; the Marshal of Nobility for the Government announced to all and sundry that he had come especially out of respect for him, and the Governor, even at the ball, even although he still remained impassive, continued to "issue orders." Matvyéi Ìlitch's softness of manner was equalled only by his stateliness. He flattered every one—some with a touch of fastidiousness, others with a touch of respect; he lavished his attentions upon the ladies, *"en vrai chevalier français,"* and laughed incessantly, with a ringing, isolated laugh, as was befitting a dignitary. He slapped Arkády on the back, and loudly called him his "dear little nephew": conferred upon Bazároff, who was dressed in a rather old dress suit, a preoccupied but condescending, sidelong glance across his cheek, and an unintelligible but courteous bellow, in which the only sounds distinguishable were "I" and "ss'ma"; gave one finger to Sítnikoff, and smiled at him, but with his head already turned away; even to Madame Kukshín, who made her appearance at the ball without any

crinoline whatever, and in dirty gloves, but with a bird of paradise in her hair,—even to Madame Kukshín he said "*Enchanté.*" There was a multitude of people, and of cavaliers there was no lack; the civilians chiefly congregated along the wall, but the military men danced assiduously, especially one of them who had spent six weeks in Paris, where he had learned divers audacious exclamations, such as: "*Zut,*" "*Ah fichtrrre,*" "*Pst, pst, mon bibi,*" and so forth. He pronounced them to perfection, with genuine Parisian *chic,* and, at the same time, he said "*si j'aurais*" instead of "*si j'avais,*" "*absolument*" in the sense of "without fail"; in a word, expressed himself in that Great Russian-French dialect at which the French laugh so heartily when they are under no necessity to assure us that we speak their language like angels—"*comme des anges.*"

Arkády danced badly, as we already know, and Bazároff did not dance at all: both of them ensconced themselves in a corner, where Sítnikoff joined them. With a sneering smile depicted on his face, and emitting venomous comments, he stared insolently around, and seemed to be genuinely enjoying himself. All at once, his face underwent a change, and turning to Arkády, he said, as though discomfited: "Madame Odíntzoff has arrived."

Arkády looked about him, and descried a wo-

man of lofty stature, in a black gown, who was standing at the door of the hall. She impressed him by the dignity of her carriage. Her bare arms hung beautifully along her stately figure; light sprays of fuchsia fell, along with her gleaming hair, upon her sloping shoulders; her bright eyes gazed calmly and intelligently—that was exactly it, calmly, not thoughtfully—from beneath her somewhat overhanging white brow, and her lips were wreathed in a barely perceptible smile. A sort of soft, caressing force emanated from her face.

"Do you know her?"—Arkády asked Sítnikoff.

"Intimately. Would you like to have me introduce you?"

"Pray do . . . . after this quadrille."

Bazároff also turned his attention to Madame Odíntzoff.

"What sort of a figure is that?"—he said.—"She does not resemble the other women."

Having awaited the end of the quadrille, Sítnikoff led Arkády up to Madame Odíntzoff; but he did not seem to be intimately acquainted with her, and got tangled up in his speech, and she stared at him in some surprise. But her face assumed a cordial expression when she heard Arkády's surname. She asked him whether he was not the son of Nikolái Petróvitch?

"Yes."

"I have seen your father a couple of times; and I have heard a great deal about him,"—she continued;—"I am very glad to make your acquaintance."

At that moment, some adjutant or other flew up to her, and invited her for a quadrille. She accepted.

"Do you dance?"—asked Arkády respectfully.

"Yes. But what makes you think that I do not? Is it that I seem to you too old?"

"Good gracious, how can you! . . . In that case, permit me to invite you for the mazurka."

Madame Odíntzoff smiled graciously. "Very well,"—she said, and looked at Arkády, not exactly with condescension, but as married sisters look at very youthful brothers. Madame Odíntzoff was a little older than Arkády,—she was nine-and-twenty,—but in her presence he felt himself a school-boy, a student, as though the difference of years between them were much greater. Matvyéi Ílitch approached her with a majestic mien and obsequious speeches. Arkády stepped to one side, but continued to observe her: he never took his eyes from her during the entire course of the quadrille. She chatted with her partner as unconstrainedly as with the dignitary; she moved her head and eyes softly, and laughed softly a couple of times. Her nose, as is the case with most Russians, was rather thick, and her com-

plexion was not perfectly clear; notwithstanding this, Arkády made up his mind that he had never yet met so charming a woman. The sound of her voice did not quit his ears; it seemed as though the very folds of her gown fell differently from those of other women, in broader, more stately wise, and her movements were particularly flowing and natural, at one and the same time.

Arkády felt a certain timidity at heart when, at the first sounds of the mazurka,[1] he seated himself by the side of his lady, and, preparing to enter into conversation, merely passed his hand over his hair, and could find not a single word to say. But he did not remain quaking and agitated long; Madame Odíntzoff's composure communicated itself to him: a quarter of an hour had not elapsed before he was telling her about his father, his uncle, life in Petersburg and in the country. Madame Odíntzoff listened to him with polite interest, lightly opening and shutting her fan; his chit-chat ceased when cavaliers led her out; Sítnikoff, among others, invited her twice. She returned, sat down again, took up her fan, and her bosom did not even heave more rapidly, while Arkády began again to chatter, all permeated with happiness to find himself near her, to talk with her, gazing into her eyes, at her beautiful brow, at the whole of her lovely, dignified, and clever

[1] The mazurka greatly resembles the cotillon; but differs in the animated, graceful step peculiar to it, and its spirited *abandon*, when properly danced.—TRANSLATOR.

countenance. She herself talked little, but knowledge of life was revealed in her words; from some of her remarks, Arkády inferred that this young woman had already succeeded in feeling and thinking a great deal. . . .

"Who was that you were standing with,"—she asked him,—"when Mr. Sítnikoff led you up to me?"

"Did you notice him?"—asked Arkády in his turn.—"He has a splendid face, has n't he? He is a certain Bazároff, my friend."

Arkády began to talk about "his friend."

He talked about him in such detail, and with such enthusiasm, that Madame Odíntzoff turned toward him, and looked attentively at him. In the meantime, the mazurka was drawing to its close. Arkády was sorry to part from his lady: he had passed about an hour so pleasantly with her! To tell the truth, during the whole course of that time he had constantly felt as though she were condescending to him, as though he ought to be grateful to her . . . but young hearts are not oppressed by that feeling.

The music stopped. "*Merci,*"—said Madame Odíntzoff, rising.—"You have promised to call on me: bring your friend with you. I have a great curiosity to see a man who has the boldness not to believe in anything."

The Governor approached Madame Odíntzoff, announced that supper was ready, and, with a

careworn countenance, offered her his arm. As she walked away, she turned round to bestow a last smile and nod on Arkády. He bowed low, gazed after her (how slender her figure seemed to him, bathed in the greyish lustre of the black silk!), and thinking, "At this moment she has already forgotten my existence,"—he felt in his soul a sort of exquisite submission. . . .

"Well, what now?"—Bazároff asked Arkády, as soon as the latter returned to him in his corner. —"Hast thou had pleasure? A gentleman has just been telling me that that lady—oï, oï, oï; but, apparently, the gentleman is a fool. Well, and, in thy opinion, what is she,—really 'oï, oï, oï'?"

"I do not in the least understand that definition,"—replied Arkády.

"The idea! What innocence!"

"In that case, I do not understand your gentleman. Madame Odíntzoff is very lovely,—that is indisputable,—but she bears herself so coldly and strictly, that . . . . ."

"Still waters . . . thou knowest!"—put in Bazároff. "Thou sayest she is cold. That 's precisely where the savour comes in. Thou art fond of ice-cream, art thou not?"

"Perhaps," stammered Arkády.—"I cannot judge as to that. She wishes to make thy acquaintance, and has asked me to bring thee to her."

"I can imagine how thou hast described me!

However, thou hast done well. Take me. Whatever she may be, a simple provincial lioness, or an '*emancipée*' after the style of Madame Kukshín, I have not seen such shoulders as hers in a long time."

Arkády writhed at Bazároff's cynicism; and, as frequently happens, he reproved his friend, but not for the precise thing which he did not like in him. . . .

"Why art not thou willing to admit freedom of thought in women?"—he said in a low voice.

"Because, brother, according to my observations, only the monsters among women think freely."

At this the conversation terminated. Both young men went away immediately after supper. Madame Kukshín laughed behind their backs, in a nervously-venomous way, but not without trepidation: her vanity had been profoundly wounded by the fact that neither of them had paid her any attention. She remained later than any one else at the ball, and at three o'clock in the morning danced the polka-mazurka with Sítnikoff, in the Parisian style. And with this edifying spectacle the gubernatorial festival wound up.

XV

"Let us see to what class of mammals these persons belong,"—said Bazároff to Arkády on the following day, as, in company with him, he ascended the stairs of the hotel in which Madame Odíntzoff was stopping.—"My nose scents out that everything is not quite as it should be."

"I am amazed at thee!"—exclaimed Arkády. —"What? Thou, thou, Bazároff, art wedded to that narrow morality which . . . . ."

"What a queer fellow thou art!"—interrupted Bazároff carelessly.—"Is it possible that thou dost not know that in our jargon, and with the like of us, 'not quite as it should be' signifies 'as it should be'? It means there is something to be gained out of it. Didst not thou thyself say today that she had married strangely?—although, in my opinion, to marry a wealthy old man is not at all a strange affair, but, on the contrary, sensible. I do not believe the town gossip; but I like to think, as our cultured Governor says, that it is just."

Arkády made no reply and knocked at the door of the room. A young footman in livery conducted both friends into a large room, badly fur-

nished, like all rooms in Russian hotels, but filled with flowers. Madame Odíntzoff soon made her appearance in a simple morning gown. She seemed still younger, in the light of the spring sunshine. Arkády presented Bazároff to her, and observed, with secret surprise, that the latter appeared to be disconcerted, while Madame Odíntzoff remained perfectly tranquil, as on the preceding evening. Bazároff himself felt that he was confused, and he grew vexed. "There thou goest!—thou art afraid of a woman!" he thought; and lolling in an arm-chair, in a manner quite equal to Sítnikoff's, he began to talk with exaggerated freedom, while Madame Odíntzoff never took her bright eyes off him.

Anna Sergyéevna Odíntzoff was the daughter of Sergyéi Nikoláevitch Lókteff, a famous beauty, speculator, and gambler, who, after having held out and brawled for fifteen years in Petersburg and Moscow, had ended by utterly ruining himself at cards, and being compelled to settle down in the country, where, however, he speedily died, leaving a diminutive property to his two daughters, Anna, aged twenty, and Katerína, aged twelve years. Their mother, from the poverty-stricken race of the Princes X. . . . , had died in Petersburg while her husband was still in full feather. The position of Anna, after her father's death, was very painful. The brilliant education which she had received in Petersburg

had not prepared her for the endurance of cares connected with housekeeping and the house,—for dull country life. She knew positively no one in the whole neighbourhood, and had no one with whom to take counsel. Her father had endeavoured to avoid relations with the neighbours; he scorned them and they scorned him, each after his fashion. But she did not lose her head, and immediately wrote to her mother's sister, Princess Avdótya Stepánovna X. . . . , a malicious and conceited old woman, who, when she settled down in her nieces' house, appropriated to herself the best rooms, grumbled and growled from morning till night, and never walked, even in the garden, otherwise than attended by her solitary serf, a surly lackey in a threadbare, yellowish-grey livery, with blue galloons and a three-cornered hat. Anna patiently endured all her aunt's whims, occupied herself somewhat with her sister's education, and, apparently, had already reconciled herself to the idea of withering away in the wilds. . . . But fate decreed differently for her. A certain Odíntzoff saw her by accident, a very rich man of six-and-forty, an eccentric, a hypochondriac, plump, heavy, and sour, but not stupid, and not bad-tempered; he fell in love with her, and offered her his hand. She consented to be his wife,—and he lived with her six years, then died, having bequeathed his entire property to her. Anna Sergyéevna did not leave the coun-

try at all, for about a year after his death; then she and her sister went abroad, but sojourned only in Germany: she was bored, and returned to reside in her beloved Nikólskoe, which was situated about forty versts from the town of * * *. There she had a magnificent, well-furnished house, and a beautiful park, with hothouses: the late Odíntzoff had denied himself nothing. Anna Sergyéevna very rarely made her appearance in town, and then chiefly on business, and that not for long. She was not liked in the Government; there had been a great outcry over her marriage with Odíntzoff; all sorts of idle tales were narrated about her: it was asserted that she had aided her father in his cheating scrapes, that she had not gone abroad without a cause, compelled thereto to conceal the unfortunate consequences . . . . "You understand of what?"—the indignant narrators were wont to wind up.—"She has been through fire and water," they said of her; and the familiar governmental wit generally added: "and through brass trumpets." All these comments reached her; but she let them pass: she had a free and rather decided character.

Madame Odíntzoff sat, leaning against the back of her arm-chair, and, clasping her hands, she listened to Bazároff. Contrary to his wont, he talked a good deal, and evidently made efforts to

interest his interlocutor, which again surprised Arkády. He could not make up his mind whether Bazároff was attaining his object or not. It was difficult to divine from Anna Sergyéevna's face what impressions she was receiving: it preserved one and the same expression, courteous, refined; her beautiful eyes beamed with attention, but unperturbed attention. Bazároff's airs during the first moments of his visit had acted unpleasantly on her, like a bad smell or a harsh sound; but she immediately comprehended that he was suffering from confusion, and this was even flattering to her. Only the commonplace repelled her, and no one could have accused Bazároff of being commonplace. It was Arkády's fate to be kept in a constant state of wonderment on that day. He had anticipated that Bazároff would talk to Madame Odíntzoff, as she was a clever woman of his convictions and views: she herself had expressed a desire to listen to a man "who has the audacity to believe in nothing"; but, instead of that, Bazároff talked of medicine, of homœopathy, of botany. It turned out that Madame Odíntzoff had not wasted her time in her isolation: she had read several good books, and expressed herself in correct Russian. She turned the conversation on music, but perceiving that Bazároff did not recognise art, she quietly returned to botany, although Arkády had started in to discuss the significance of

popular melodies. Madame Odíntzoff continued to treat him like a younger brother; apparently, she prized in him the goodness and simple-mindedness of youth—and that was all. The conversation lasted more than three hours, leisurely, varied, and animated.

At last the friends rose and began to take leave. Anna Sergyéevna gazed cordially at them, offered each of them her beautiful, white hand, and, after brief reflection, she said, with a decided but agreeable smile:—"If you are not afraid of being bored, gentlemen, come to visit me at Nikólskoe."

"Really, Anna Sergyéevna,"—exclaimed Arkády,—"I shall regard it as a special happiness. . . ."

"And you, Monsieur Bazároff?"

Bazároff merely bowed,—and Arkády was obliged, for the last time, to marvel: he had observed that his friend was blushing.

"Well?"—said he to him in the street:—"art thou still of the same opinion, that she is—'oï, oï, oï'?"

"Who knows! Thou seest how she froze herself!"—retorted Bazároff, and, after a pause, he added:—"A duchess, a reigning personage. All she needs is to wear a train behind her and a crown on her head."

"Our duchesses do not speak Russian like that,"—remarked Arkády.

"She has been made over, my dear fellow; she has eaten our bread."

"And, nevertheless, she is charming,"—said Arkády.

"Such a rich body!"—went on Bazároff:—"she might go straight into the anatomical theatre."

"Stop, for God's sake, Evgény! Who ever heard the like!"

"Well, don't get angry, softy. I have said it—she 's first class. We must go to her house."

"When?"

"Why, suppose we make it the day after to-morrow. What is there for us to do here! Drink champagne with Madame Kukshín? Listen to thy relative, the liberal big-wig? So let 's flit out there the day after to-morrow. By the way, too, my father's little manor-house is not far from there. That Nikólskoe is on the *** road, is n't it?"

"Yes."

"*Optime.* There's no use in hesitating; only fools hesitate—and wise men. I tell thee: 't is a rich body!"

Three days later, both friends were driving along the road to Nikólskoe. The day was bright, and not too hot, and the fat posting-horses trotted briskly, slightly twitching their twisted and plaited tails. Arkády gazed at the road, and smiled, without himself knowing why.

"Congratulate me,"—exclaimed Bazároff suddenly,—"to-day is the twenty-second of June, the day of my guardian angel. Let us see how he takes care of me. They are expecting me at home to-day," he added, lowering his voice. . . . "Well, let them wait; it 's of no great importance!"

XVI

The manor-house in which dwelt Anna Sergyéevna stood on a sloping, open hill, not far from a yellow stone church with a green roof, white pillars, and an al fresco painting over the principal entrance, representing the "Resurrection of Christ," in the "Italian" taste. Especially noteworthy for his rounded contours was a swarthy warrior, in a short jacket, who sprawled over the foreground. Behind the church, in two long rows, extended the village, with chimneys peeping above the straw thatches here and there. The manor-house was spacious, in the same style with the church—the style which is known among us by the name of the Alexandrine; this house also was painted yellow, and had a green roof and white pillars, and a pediment with a coat of arms. The governmental architect had erected both buildings, with the approbation of the deceased Odíntzoff, who could not tolerate any empty and new-fangled caprices, as he expressed it. Close to the house on both sides lay the dusky trees of the ancient park; an avenue of clipped firs led to the entrance.

Our friends were received in the anteroom by

two robust footmen in livery; one of them immediately ran for the butler. The butler, a fat man in a black dress-coat, immediately presented himself, and directed the guests over the rug-covered staircase to a special room, where already stood two beds, with all the accessories of the toilet. It was evident that order reigned in the house: everything was clean, and there was some agreeable perfume everywhere about, just as in ministerial receptions.

"Anna Sergyéevna begs that you will come to her in half an hour,"—announced the butler:—"have you no orders to give in the meanwhile?"

"We have no orders, my most respected,"—replied Bazároff:—"unless you will be so good as to bring a glass of vódka."

"I obey, sir,"—said the butler, not without surprise, and retired, with squeaking boots.

"What *grand genre!*"—remarked Bazároff:—"I believe that is what it is called in your language? A duchess, and that's all there is about it."

"A good duchess,"—replied Arkády;—"the very first time she met such mighty aristocrats as thou and I, she invited us to her house."

"Especially I, who am a medical man, the son of a medical man, the grandson of a chanter. . . . Of course thou knewest that I am the grandson of a chanter?"

"Like Speránsky,"[1]—added Bazároff, after a brief silence and curling his lips. "But she has indulged herself, all the same; okh, how this lady has indulged herself. Ought not we to don our dress-suits?"

Arkády merely shrugged his shoulders; . . . but he, too, felt some agitation.

Half an hour later Bazároff and Arkády entered the drawing-room. It was a spacious, lofty room, furnished with considerable luxury, but without any particular taste. The heavy, costly furniture stood in the customary affected order along the walls, which were covered with light-brown paper with gilded flowers. Odíntzoff had ordered it from Moscow through his friend and commissioner, a liquor dealer. Over the central divan hung the portrait of a shrivelled, fair-haired man,—and it seemed to be staring at the visitors in a hostile manner. "It must be he," whispered Bazároff, and wrinkling up his nose, he added, "Shan't we decamp?"

But at that moment the hostess entered. She wore a light barege gown; her hair, brushed smoothly behind her ears, imparted a virginal expression to her pure, fresh face.

"Thank you for having kept your word,"—she began;—"stay a while with me: it really is not bad here. I will introduce you to my sister; she

[1] Speránsky rose to be a Count, and a Minister of Alexander I.—TRANSLATOR.

plays well on the piano. That makes no difference to you, M'sieu Bazároff; but I think you are fond of music, M'sieu Kirsánoff; in addition to my sister, my old aunt lives with me, and a neighbour sometimes drops in to play cards: that is our entire society. But now let us sit down."

Madame Odíntzoff uttered this little speech with peculiar distinctness, as though she had committed it to memory; then she turned to Arkády. It appeared that her mother had known Arkády's mother, and had even been the confidante of her love for Nikolái Petróvitch. Arkády began to talk with fervour about the dead woman; and, in the meantime, Bazároff occupied himself with inspecting the albums. "What a meek individual I have become," he said to himself.

A handsome greyhound, with a blue collar, ran into the drawing-room, clattering his claws on the floor, and after him entered a young girl of eighteen, with black hair and brown complexion, a rather chubby but pleasing face, and small dark eyes. She held in her hand a basket filled with flowers. "Here is my Kátya," said Madame Odíntzoff, indicating her by a movement of the head.

Kátya made a slight curtsey, placed herself beside her sister, and began to sort over her flowers. The greyhound, whose name was Fifi, approached each visitor in turn, wagging his tail, and thrust his cold nose into the hand of each of them.

"Didst thou pluck all those thyself?"—asked Madame Odíntzoff.

"Yes,"—replied Kátya.

"And is aunty coming to tea?"

"Yes."

When Kátya spoke she smiled very prettily, bashfully, and candidly, and looked upwards from below in a comically-grim manner. Everything about her was still extremely youthful: her voice, and the fine down all over her face, and her rosy hands, with whitish circles on the palms, and her rather cramped shoulders. . . She was incessantly blushing and hastily catching her breath.

Madame Odíntzoff turned to Bazároff.—"You are looking at those pictures out of politeness, Evgény Vasílitch,"—she began.—"They do not interest you. You had better move up nearer us, and we will get into an argument over something or other."

Bazároff approached.—"What shall we argue about?"—he said.

"About anything you like. I warn you that I am a frightfully quarrelsome person."

"You?"

"Yes, I. That seems to surprise you. Why?"

"Because, so far as I can judge, you have a calm and cold nature, and for dispute enthusiasm is necessary."

"How is it that you have succeeded in finding me out so promptly? In the first place, I am im-

patient and persistent: ask Kátya if I am not; and, in the second place, I am very easily aroused to enthusiasm."

Bazároff looked at Anna Sergyéevna.—"Perhaps you ought to know best. So you would like to dispute,—very well. I have been looking over the views of the Saxon Switzerland in your album, and you have remarked to me that that could not interest me. You said that because you do not suspect me of having artistic sense,—and, as a matter of fact, I have not; but I might take an interest in those pictures from a geological point of view—from the point of view of the formation of mountains, for example."

"Excuse me; as a geologist you would be more likely to have recourse to a book, to a special work, and not to a drawing."

"The drawing presents to me at a glance that which in the book is set forth in ten whole pages."

Anna Sergyéevna was silent for a while.

"And have you really not a tiny drop of artistic sense?"—she said, setting her elbows on the table, and by that very movement bringing her face closer to Bazároff.—"How do you get along without it?"

"What is the use of it, permit me to inquire?"

"Why, if for nothing else, that one may learn how to understand and study people."

Bazároff laughed.—"In the first place, the ex-

perience of life exists for that purpose; and, in the second place, I must inform you that it is not worth while to study separate individuals. All people resemble one another, in soul as in body; each one of us has brain, spleen, heart, lungs, of identical structure; and the so-called moral qualities are exactly alike in all: the slight difference of aspect signifies nothing. One specimen of humanity is sufficient to enable us to judge of all the rest. Men are like the trees in a forest—not a single botanist will busy himself with each separate birch."

Kátya, who was matching flower to flower in a leisurely way, raised her eyes to Bazároff in surprise,—and encountering his swift and careless glance, flushed crimson to her very ears. Anna Sergyéevna shook her head.

"The trees in the forest,"—she repeated.—"So, according to you, there is no difference between a stupid and a clever man, between a good one and a bad one."

"Yes, there is: as there is between a well man and a sick one. The lungs of the consumptive are not in the same conditions as yours and mine are, although they are constructed in the same manner. We know, approximately, whence come bodily ailments; but moral ailments proceed from a bad education, from all sorts of nonsense with which people's heads are stuffed from their infancy, from the abnormal condition of society—in

a word, reform society, and there will be no disease."

Bazároff said all this with an aspect which seemed to indicate that, at the same time, he was saying to himself: "Whether you believe me or not, it 's all one to me!" He slowly drew his long fingers through his side-whiskers and his eyes wandered about the corners of the room.

"And you assume,"—said Anna Sergyéevna,—"that when society shall have been reformed there will be no more stupid, no more wicked, men?"

"At all events, with a regular arrangement of society, it will not matter whether a man is stupid or clever, wicked or good."

"Yes, I understand; all will have identically the same spleen."

"Precisely that, madam."

Madame Odíntzoff turned to Arkády.—"And what is your opinion, Arkády Nikoláevitch?"

"I agree with Evgény,"—he replied.

Kátya cast a sidelong glance at him.

"You amaze me, gentlemen,"—said Madame Odíntzoff;—"but we will discuss this later on. And now I hear my aunt coming to drink tea; we must spare her ears."

Anna Sergyéevna's aunt, Princess X . . . , a thin, small woman, with a face about the size of one's fist, and staring, malicious eyes beneath her grey wig, entered, and hardly saluting the visitors,

dropped down in a capacious velvet arm-chair, in which no one except herself had a right to sit. Kátya placed a stool under her feet; the old woman did not thank her, did not even look at her, only moved her hands about under the yellow shawl, which covered almost the whole of her puny body. The Princess loved yellow: she also had bright yellow ribbons on her cap.

"How have you slept, aunty?"—asked Madame Odíntzoff, lowering her voice.

"There 's that dog here again,"—growled the old woman in response; and noticing that Fifi took a couple of undecided steps in her direction, she cried out: "Scat! scat!"

Kátya called Fifi, and opened the door for him.

Fifi rushed joyously forth, in the hope that he would be taken for a walk, but on finding himself alone outside the door, began to scratch and whine. The Princess frowned. Kátya started to go out. . . .

"Tea is ready, I think?"—said Madame Odíntzoff.—"Come, gentlemen; aunty, please come and drink tea."

The Princess rose in silence from her chair and left the drawing-room first. All followed her to the dining-room. A page-boy in livery noisily moved away from the table a chair garnished with pillows, also sacred to her use, in which the Princess seated herself; Kátya, when she poured the tea, served her first in a cup with a painted coat

of arms. The old woman put honey in her cup (she thought it sinful to drink tea with sugar,[1] and expensive, although she herself did not spend a farthing on this), and suddenly inquired, in a hoarse voice: "And what does *Prance* Iván write?"

No one answered her. Bazároff and Arkády speedily divined that no one paid any attention to her, although they treated her respectfully. "For the sake of maintaining their dignity, because she is a princely sprig," thought Bazároff. . . After tea Anna Sergyéevna suggested that they should go for a stroll, but a fine rain began to fall, and the whole company, with the exception of the Princess, returned to the drawing-room. The neighbour who was fond of cards, by name Porfíry Platónitch, arrived,—a fat, grey-haired man, with short legs, which looked just as though they had been turned in a lathe, a very polite and entertaining person. Anna Sergyéevna, who had been chatting principally with Bazároff, asked him whether he would not like to have an old-fashioned battle at preference with him. Bazároff consented, saying that he must prepare himself in advance for the duties of a country doctor which awaited him.

"Take care,"—remarked Anna Sergyéevna,—

[1] Probably, on the same ground that the devout do not use sugar during the Church fasts, viz., because it is clarified with blood—an animal substance.—TRANSLATOR.

"Porfíry Platónitch and I shall beat you. And do thou, Kátya,"—she added,—"play something for Arkády Nikoláevitch; he is fond of music, and we will listen also."

Kátya went unwillingly to the piano; and Arkády, although he really was fond of music, unwillingly followed her: it seemed to him that Madame Odíntzoff was sending him away,—and in his heart, as in the heart of every young man of his age, there was seething an agitated and oppressive feeling, resembling a presentiment of love. Kátya raised the lid of the piano, and, without looking at Arkády, said in an undertone:

"What shall I play for you?"

"Whatever you like,"—replied Arkády indifferently.

"What sort of music do you prefer?"—repeated Kátya, without changing her position.

"Classical,"—replied Arkády, in the same tone.

"Do you like Mozart?"

"Yes."

Kátya got Mozart's Sonata-Fantasia in C minor. She played very well, although rather severely and dryly. She sat motionless and stiff, never taking her eyes from her notes, and with lips tightly compressed, and only toward the end of the sonata did her face grow flushed, and a little strand of uncurled hair fall on her forehead.

Arkády was particularly struck by the last

part of the sonata—by that part in which, through the enchanting mirth of the care-free melody, bursts of such mournful, almost tragic woe, suddenly penetrate. . . But the thoughts evoked in him by the strains of Mozart did not refer to Kátya. As he gazed at her he merely thought: "Really, this young lady does not play badly, and she herself is not bad-looking."

When she had finished the sonata Kátya inquired, without removing her hands from the keys, "Is that enough?" Arkády declared that he did not dare to inconvenience her further, and began to talk to her about Mozart; he asked her whether she had chosen that sonata herself, or had some one recommended it to her? But Kátya answered him in monosyllables: she *had hidden herself,* retreated into herself. When that happened with her she did not speedily come to the surface; at such times her very face assumed an obstinate, almost stupid expression. She was not precisely shy, but distrustful and rather terrified by her sister, who had reared her, which the latter, of course, did not even suspect. Arkády ended by calling up Fifi, who had returned, and, by way of keeping himself in countenance, began to stroke his head, smiling benevolently. Kátya betook herself again to her flowers.

And, in the meantime, Bazároff kept losing and losing. Anna Sergyéevna played a masterly hand at cards; Porfíry Platónitch also could

stand up for himself. Bazároff was the loser, and although not to any considerable extent, yet it was not altogether pleasant for him. After supper Anna Sergyéevna turned the conversation upon botany again.

"Let us go for a walk to-morrow morning,"—she said to him;—"I wish to learn from you the Latin names of the field-plants and their properties."

"What do you want with the Latin names?"—asked Bazároff.

"One must have order in everything,"—she replied.

"What a marvellous woman Anna Sergyéevna is,"—exclaimed Arkády, when he was alone with his friend in the chamber assigned to them.

"Yes,"—replied Bazároff,—"a woman with a brain. Well, and she has seen sights."

"In what sense dost thou say that, Evgény Vasílitch?"

"In a good sense, a good sense, my dear Arkády Nikoláevitch! I am convinced that she manages her estate excellently. But the marvel is not she, but her sister."

"What? That brown-faced little thing?"

"Yes, that brown-faced little thing. She 's fresh, and unsullied, and timid, and taciturn, and anything you like. That 's a person one can get interested in. You can make of her anything you

take it into your head to make; but the other—is a shrewd creature."

Arkády made no reply to Bazároff, and both of them lay down to sleep with special thoughts in their heads.

And Anna Sergyéevna on that same evening was thinking of her guests. She liked Bazároff —his absence of coquetry and the very harshness of his judgments. She discerned in him something new which she had not hitherto chanced to encounter, and she was curious.

Anna Sergyéevna was rather a strange being. Devoid of prejudices, devoid even of any strong beliefs, she yielded to no one and followed no one. She saw much clearly, much interested her, and nothing completely satisfied her; and complete satisfaction was hardly what she wanted. Her mind was inquisitive and indifferent at one and the same time: her doubts were never appeased to forgetfulness and never increased to alarm. Had she not been wealthy and independent, she might possibly have flung herself into the fray and have known passion. . . But life was easy for her, although she was sometimes bored; she continued to pass day after day in a leisurely manner, only growing agitated now and then. Rainbow hues sometimes flashed up before her eyes also, but she breathed more freely when they had faded away, and she did not regret them. Her imagination carried her even beyond the bounds

of that which, according to the ordinary laws of morality, is considered permissible; but even then her blood flowed as quietly as ever in her entrancingly-stately and tranquil body. There were times when, on emerging from a perfumed bath, all warm and enervated, she took to meditating upon the insignificance of life, its woe, toil and evil. . . Her soul would be filled with sudden audacity, would seethe with noble aspiration; but let a draught blow through the half-open window and Anna Sergyéevna would shrink together, and complain and almost wax angry, and she wanted only one thing at such moments: that that hateful wind should not blow upon her.

Like all women who have not managed to fall in love, she wanted something—precisely what she did not know. As a matter of fact, she wanted nothing, although it seemed to her that she wanted everything. She had barely tolerated the late Odíntzoff (she had married him from calculation, although, in all probability, she would not have consented to be his wife if she had not regarded him as a kind man), and had acquired a secret disgust for all men, whom she pictured to herself as dirty, heavy and indolent, impotently tiresome beings. Once, somewhere abroad, she had met a young man, a handsome Swede, with a knightly expression of countenance, with honest blue eyes beneath an open brow; he had made a strong im-

pression upon her, but this had not prevented her returning to Russia.

"A strange man, that doctor!" she thought, as she lay down in her magnificent bed on her lace pillows under a light silken coverlet. . . . Anna Sergyéevna had inherited from her father a portion of his inclination for luxury. She had been very fond of her sinful but kind father, and he had idolised her, had jested with her in friendly wise as with an equal, and had trusted her utterly —had taken counsel with her. She hardly remembered her mother.

"That doctor is a strange fellow!" she repeated to herself. She stretched herself, smiled, threw her arms behind her head, then ran her eyes over the pages of a couple of dull French romances—and fell asleep, all pure and cold, in her clean and perfumed linen.

On the following morning Anna Sergyéevna, immediately after breakfast, went off to botanise with Bazároff, and returned home just before dinner; Arkády did not go off anywhere, and spent about an hour with Kátya. He did not find himself bored in her society; she offered of her own accord to repeat for him the sonata she had played on the day before; but when, at last, Madame Odíntzoff returned, when he beheld her—his heart instantly contracted within him. . . . She was walking through the garden with a somewhat fatigued step; her cheeks were of a vivid

scarlet, and her eyes were shining more brilliantly than usual beneath her round straw hat. She was twirling in her fingers the slender stem of a wild flower, her light mantilla had slipped down to her elbows, and the broad grey ribbons of her hat clung closely to her bosom. Bazároff was walking behind her in a self-confident, careless way, as always, but the expression of his face, although it was cheerful and even bland, did not please Arkády. Muttering through his teeth, "Good morning!"—Bazároff went off to his room, and Madame Odíntzoff shook hands with Arkády in a preoccupied way, and also walked on past him.

"Good morning," — thought Arkády. . . . "But have we not seen each other already to-day?"

XVII

It is a familiar fact that time sometimes flies like a bird, sometimes crawls like a worm; but a man is particularly happy when he does not notice whether it is passing swiftly or slowly. In precisely this manner did Arkády and Bazároff spend a fortnight at Madame Odíntzoff's. This result was contributed to by the order which she had introduced into her household and her life. She adhered strictly to it, and made others conform to it also. Throughout the whole day everything was done at an appointed time. In the morning, exactly at eight o'clock, the whole company assembled for tea; from tea until breakfast each one did whatever he wished, and the hostess busied herself with her steward (the estate was managed on the quit-rent system), with her butlers, and with the head-housekeeper. Before dinner the company again assembled for conversation or reading; the evening was devoted to strolls, cards, music; at half-past ten Anna Sergéevna retired to her own room, issued orders for the following day, and went to bed. Bazároff did not like this measured, somewhat solemn regularity of daily life: "You roll along as though

on rails," he asserted; the liveried lackeys, the stately butlers, offended his democratic feeling. He thought that if it had come to that then they ought to dine in English fashion, in dress-suits and white ties. One day he stated his views on this point to Anna Sergyéevna. She bore herself in such a manner that any man could, without circumlocution, express his opinions in her presence. She heard him out, and said: "From your point of view, you are right—and, perhaps, in that case, —I am a gentlewoman; but one cannot live without order in the country,—one would be bored to death,"—and went on in her own way. Bazároff grumbled, but he and Arkády found life easy at Madame Odíntzoff's, because everything in her house did "run as though on rails." Nevertheless, both young men underwent a change from the very first days of their stay at Nikólskoe. A trepidation hitherto non-existent made its appearance in Bazároff, whom Anna Sergyéevna obviously favoured: he was easily irritated, talked unwillingly, wore an angry aspect, and could not sit still in one place, just as though something made him uneasy; and Arkády, who had finally decided in his own mind that he was in love with Madame Odíntzoff, began to surrender himself to gentle melancholy. However, this melancholy did not prevent his becoming intimate with Kátya; it even aided him to enter into friendly, affectionate relations with her. "*She* does not

appreciate me! So be it! . . . But here is a kind being who will not spurn me," he thought, and his heart again tasted the sweetness of magnanimous sentiments. Kátya dimly comprehended that he was seeking some sort of consolation in her society, and did not refuse to him or to herself the innocent gratification of a half-bashful, half-confiding friendship. They did not talk to each other in the presence of Anna Sergyéevna: Kátya always contracted beneath her sister's keen glance, and Arkády, as was befitting a man in love, in the presence of his adored object could not devote any attention to anything else; but he was happy alone with Kátya. He felt that he was not capable of interesting Madame Odíntzoff; he became timid and lost his presence of mind when he was left alone with her; and she did not know what to say to him: he was too young for her. On the other hand, with Kátya Arkády was at home, as it were; he treated her condescendingly, did not interfere with her expressing the impressions awakened in her by music, the perusal of novels, of poetry, and by other trifles, without himself perceiving or acknowledging that these *trifles* interested him. Arkády was at ease with Kátya, Madame Odíntzoff with Bazároff, and consequently this was the usual order of things: the two couples after remaining a short time together went their separate ways, especially during rambles. Kátya *adored* nature, and Arkády loved it,

although he did not dare to confess it; Madame Odíntzoff was quite indifferent to it, as was also Bazároff. The almost constant separation of our friends did not remain without results: the relations between them began to undergo a change. Bazároff ceased to talk to Arkády about Madame Odíntzoff, ceased even to revile her "aristocratic habits"; it is true that he lauded Kátya as before, and only advised that her sentimental tendencies should be checked, but his praises were hasty, his advice curt, and, in general, he talked much less to Arkády than of yore: . . . he seemed to shun him, as though he were ashamed in his presence. . . .

Arkády observed all this, but kept his observations to himself.

The real cause of all this "novelty" was the sentiment with which Madame Odíntzoff had inspired Bazároff—a sentiment which tortured and enraged him, and which he would have spurned on the instant, with scornful laughter and cynical sneers, had any one hinted, even distantly, at the possibility of that which had taken place in him, Bazároff. Bazároff was very fond of women and of feminine beauty, but love in the ideal, or, as he expressed it, the romantic sense, he called balderdash, unpardonable folly; regarded chivalrous sentiments as a sort of deformity or malady, and had more than once given utterance to his amazement at their not having put Toggenburg,

along with all his minnesingers and troubadours, in a mad-house! "If a woman pleases you," he had been wont to say, "try to get to the bottom of the business; but if that is impossible, well, you don't want her: turn away, she's not the only one in the world." Madame Odíntzoff pleased him: the rumours in circulation about her, the freedom and independence of her thoughts, her indubitable liking for him,—everything, apparently, spoke in his favour; but he speedily comprehended that with her one could not "get to the bottom of the business," and that, to his own amazement, he had not the strength to turn away from her. His blood began to boil as soon as he called her to mind; he could easily have controlled his blood, but something else had taken up its abode in him, which he in nowise admitted, over which he was forever sneering, which revolted his pride. In his conversations with Anna Sergyéevna he more than ever expressed his indifferent scorn for everything romantic; and when he was left alone he recognised with wrath the romantic in himself. Then he went off to the forest and roamed about it in huge strides, breaking the boughs which came in his way, and cursing in an undertone both her and himself; or he ensconced himself in the hay-loft, in a shed, and, obstinately shutting his eyes, he forced himself to sleep, which, as a matter of course, he did not always succeed in doing. All

at once it would seem to him as though those chaste arms were encircling his neck, those proud lips were responding to his kisses, those intelligent eyes were riveted tenderly,—yes, tenderly,—on his eyes, and his head would begin to reel, and he would forget himself for a moment until indignation again flared up within him. He caught himself in all sorts of "shameful" thoughts, as though a demon were tormenting him. It sometimes seemed to him that a change was taking place in Madame Odíntzoff, that in the expression of her face something peculiar had made its appearance, but that possibly. . . . But at this point he generally stamped his foot, or gnashed his teeth, and menaced himself with his clenched fist.

Nevertheless, Bazároff was not mistaken. He had struck Madame Odíntzoff's imagination; he interested her, and she thought a great deal about him. She was not bored in his absence, she did not wait for him, but his appearance immediately imparted animation to her; she willingly remained alone with him, and liked to talk with him, even when he angered her, or offended her taste, her elegant habits. She seemed to be desirous of both testing him and sounding herself.

One day as he was strolling in the garden with her he suddenly said, in a surly voice, that he intended soon to go away to the village to his father. . . She turned pale, as though something had stung her heart, and stung it in such wise that

she was surprised, and meditated for a long time what this might mean. Bazároff had informed her of his departure, not with the idea of putting her to the test to see what would come of it: he never "invented." On the morning of that day he had had an interview with his father's manager, his former valet, Timoféitch. This Timoféitch, an experienced and alert old man, with faded yellow hair, weather-beaten red face, and tiny tear-drops in his blinking eyes, had unexpectedly presented himself to Bazároff in his short overcoat of thick, greyish-blue cloth, girt with a fragment of leather, and in tarred boots.

"Ah, old man, how art thou!"—exclaimed Bazároff.

"Good morning, dear little father Evgény Vasílitch,"—began the little old man, and smiled joyously, which caused his whole face suddenly to be covered with wrinkles.

"Why art thou come? Have they sent thee for me?"

"Good gracious, dear little father, how can you think that!"—lisped Timoféitch (he called to mind the strict orders he had received from his master when he set out).—"I was going to town on business and heard about your grace, so I turned aside on the way, that is—to have a look at your grace; . . . . but how could any one feel uneasy?"

"Come, don't lie,"—Bazároff interrupted him.

—" Dost thou mean to say that thy road to town lies here?" Timoféitch hesitated and made no reply.—" Is my father well?"

" Yes. Glory to God, sir."

" And my mother?"

" And Arína Vlásievna also, glory to Thee, O Lord."

" I suppose they are expecting me!"

The little old man hung his tiny head on one side,—" Akh, Evgény Vasílievitch, how can they help expecting you, sir! As you believe in God, my heart has ached as I looked at your parents."

" Well, very good, very good! Don't describe it. Tell them that I will come soon."

" I obey, sir,"—replied Timoféitch, with a sigh.

As he emerged from the house he banged his cap down on his head with both hands, climbed into the mean racing drozhky which he had left at the gate, and drove off at a trot, only not in the direction of the town.

On the evening of the same day Madame Odíntzoff was sitting in her room with Bazároff, while Arkády was pacing the music-room and listening to Kátya's playing. The Princess had retired to her own room up-stairs; in general, she could not bear visitors, and in particular these " sans culottes," as she called them. In the state apartments she did nothing but pout; on the other hand, in her own room, in the presence of her maid, she sometimes broke out into such abuse

that her cap flew off her head in company with her wig. Madame Odíntzoff was aware of this.

"Why are you preparing to leave,"—she began;—"and how about your promise?"

Bazároff started.—"What promise, madam?"

"Have you forgotten? You were to give me a few lessons in chemistry."

"What is to be done, ma'am? My father expects me; I can delay no longer. However, you can read: Pelouze et Frémy, 'Notions Générales de Chimie'; it is a good book and clearly written. In it you will find everything that is necessary."

"But remember you assured me that a book cannot take the place .... I have forgotten how you expressed yourself, but you know what I want to say, ... do you remember?"

"What is to be done, ma'am?"—repeated Bazároff.

"Why go?"—said Madame Odíntzoff, lowering her voice.

He glanced at her. She had thrown her head against the back of the arm-chair and had crossed her hands—her arms were bare to the elbow—on her lap. She seemed paler by the light of the solitary lamp, shaded by a network of cut paper. Her ample white gown almost completely covered her with its soft folds; the tips of her feet, which were also crossed, were barely visible.

"And why stay?"—replied Bazároff.

Madame Odíntzoff turned her head slightly.—

"What do you mean by asking why? Don't you find things cheerful in my house? Or do you think that no one will regret you here?"

"I am convinced of that."

Madame Odíntzoff was silent for a space.—"You are mistaken in thinking so. However, I do not believe you. You cannot have said that seriously."

Bazároff continued to sit there motionless.—"Evgény Vasílievitch, why do not you speak?"

"But what can I say to you? It is not worth while to regret people in general, and me in particular."

"Why so?"

"I am a sedate, uninteresting man. I do not know how to talk."

"You are begging for a compliment, Evgény Vasílievitch."

"That is not my habit. Do not you know yourself that the elegant side of life is inaccessible to me, the side which you value so highly?"

Madame Odíntzoff nibbled the corner of her handkerchief.—"Think what you like, but I shall find it dull when you are gone."

"Arkády will remain,"—remarked Bazároff.

Madame Odíntzoff shrugged her shoulders slightly.—"I shall find it dull,"—she repeated.

"Really? In any case, you will not be bored long."

"Why do you assume that?"

"Because you yourself have told me that you are bored only when your order is disturbed. You have arranged your life in such an impeccably-regular manner that there can be no room in it for irksomeness or dulness . . . or for any painful feelings."

"And you think that I am impeccable? . . . that is to say, that I have arranged my life in such a regular manner?"

"Certainly! Here, for example: in a few minutes the clock will strike ten, and I know beforehand that you will drive me away."

"No, I shall not drive you away, Evgény Vasílievitch. You may stay. Open that window. . . I feel stifled for some reason."

Bazároff rose and pushed the window. It immediately flew open with a bang. . . He had not expected that it would open so readily; moreover, his hands were trembling. The dark, soft night peered into the room with its almost black sky, faintly rustling trees, and fresh odour of the open, pure air.

"Pull down the shade and sit down,"—said Madame Odíntzoff:—"I want to have a chat with you before your departure. Tell me something about yourself; you never talk about yourself."

"I try to talk to you about useful subjects, Anna Sergyéevna."

"You are very modest. . . But I should like to know something about you, about your family,

about your father, for whom you are abandoning us."

"Why does she say such words?" thought Bazároff.

"All that is not in the least interesting,"—he articulated aloud:—"especially for you; we are ordinary people. . . . ."

"And I, in your opinion, am an aristocrat?"

Bazároff raised his eyes to Madame Odíntzoff. —"Yes," he said, with exaggerated sharpness.

She laughed.—"I see that you know me very little, although you assert that all people are alike, and that it is not worth while to study them. I will narrate the story of my life to you some day; . . . . . but first you must tell me yours."

"I know you very little,"—repeated Bazároff. —"Perhaps you are right; perhaps, in reality, every human being is—a riddle. Just take yourself, for example: you shun society, it is a burden to you,—and you have invited two students to reside with you. Why do you, with your mind, with your beauty, live in the country?"

"What? What is that you said?"—Madame Odíntzoff caught him up with animation—"With my . . . . . beauty?"

Bazároff frowned.—"That is nothing,"—he muttered;—"I wanted to say that I do not thoroughly understand why you have settled down in the country."

"You do not understand that. . . . But you explain it to yourself in some way or other?"

"Yes; . . . . . I suppose you remain constantly in one place because you have indulged yourself, because you love comfort, ease, and are very indifferent to everything else."

Madame Odíntzoff laughed again.—"You are positively determined not to believe that I am capable of being carried away?"

Bazároff cast a sidelong glance at her.—"By curiosity,—perhaps, but not otherwise."

"Really? Well, now I understand why you and I have become friends; for you are just such a person as myself."

"We have become friends . . . ." said Bazároff, dully.

"Yes! . . . . but I had forgotten that you want to go away."

Bazároff rose. The lamp burned dimly in the centre of the shadowy, perfumed, isolated room; through the curtain, which fluttered now and then, the exhilarating freshness of the night was wafted in, its mysterious whispering was audible. Madame Odíntzoff did not move a single member, but a secret agitation was gradually seizing hold upon her. . . . It communicated itself to Bazároff. She suddenly became conscious that he was alone with a young and beautiful woman. . . .

"Where are you going?"—she said slowly.

He made no reply and dropped into a chair.

"So you regard me as a calm, effeminate, spoiled being,"—she went on in the same tone, never taking her eyes from the window.—"But as for me, I know as to myself that I am unhappy."

"You are unhappy! Why? Is it possible that you can attach any significance to vile gossip?"

Madame Odíntzoff knit her brows. She was vexed that he had understood her in that way.

"That gossip does not even disturb me, Evgény Vasílievitch, and I am too proud to permit it to worry me. I am unhappy because . . . I have no wish, no desire to live. You look at me incredulously; you are thinking: An 'aristocrat,' all covered with lace and seated in a velvet armchair, is saying that. And I do not dissimulate: I do love what you call comfort, and, at the same time, I have very little desire to live. Accept this contradiction as you like. However, all this is romanticism in your eyes."

Bazároff shook his head.—"You are healthy, independent, rich; what more do you require? What do you want?"

"What do I want?"—repeated Madame Odíntzoff, and sighed.—"I am very weary; I am old; it seems to me that I have been living for a very great while. Yes, I am old,"—she added, gently drawing the ends of her mantilla over her bare arms.—Her eyes encountered Bazároff's

eyes, and she blushed faintly.—"There are so many memories behind me: life in Petersburg, wealth, then poverty, then my father's death, marriage, then a trip abroad, as was proper. . . . Many memories, but it is not worth while to recall them; and before me—is a long, long road, but I have no goal. . . And I do not want to go on."

"Are you so disenchanted?"—asked Bazároff.

"No,"—rejoined Madame Odíntzoff brokenly,—"but I am dissatisfied. I think that if I could become strongly attached to anything . ."

"You want to fall in love,"—Bazároff interrupted her,—"and you cannot fall in love; therein lies your misfortune."

Madame Odíntzoff inspected the sleeve of her wrap.

"Cannot I fall in love?"—she said.

"Hardly! Only I erred in calling that a misfortune. On the contrary, he is rather deserving of compassion to whom that fate befalls."

"Befalls,—what?"

"To fall in love."

"And how do you know that?"

"By hearsay,"—replied Bazároff angrily.

"Thou art flirting," he thought; "thou art bored and art teasing me for the lack of something to do, and I . . . ." In fact, his heart was fairly breaking.

"Besides, you may be too exacting,"—he said,

bending his whole body forward and playing with the fringe on the arm-chair.

"Possibly. According to my view, it is all or nothing. A life for a life. Thou hast taken mine, hand over thine, and then we can proceed without regret and without return. Otherwise, better let it alone."

"What then?"—remarked Bazároff.—"That condition is perfectly just, and I am surprised that up to this time you . . . . have not found what you want."

"But do you think it is easy to surrender one's self entirely to anything whatever?"

"It is not easy if one takes to reflecting and waiting and sets a value on one's self—esteems one's self, that is; but to surrender one's self without reflection is very easy."

"But how can one help valuing one's self? If I have no value, who wants my devotion?"

"That is no affair of mine; it is the affair of some one else to examine into the question of my value. The principal thing is to know how to surrender one's self."

Madame Odíntzoff separated herself from the back of her chair.—"You speak,"—said she—"as though you had gone through all that."

"It was a slip of the tongue, Anna Sergyëevna: all that, as you know, is not in my line."

"But would you know how to surrender yourself?"

"I do not know how; I will not boast."

Madame Odíntzoff said nothing, and Bazároff relapsed into silence. The sounds of the piano were wafted to them from the drawing-room.

"What makes Kátya play so late?"—remarked Madame Odíntzoff.

Bazároff rose. "Yes, it really is late; it is time for you to go to bed."

"Wait. Whither are you hastening. . . I must say one word more to you."

"What word?"

"Wait,"—whispered Madame Odíntzoff.—Her eyes rested on Bazároff; she seemed to be attentively inspecting him.

He paced the room, then suddenly approached her, said hastily "Farewell," gripped her hand so that she almost screamed aloud, and went out. She raised her fingers, which stuck together, to her lips, blew upon them, and rising suddenly, impulsively from her chair, walked to the door with rapid steps, as though desirous of recalling Bazároff. . . . Her maid entered the room with a carafe on a silver salver. Madame Odíntzoff stopped short, ordered her to leave the room, seated herself again, and again fell into thought. Her hair uncoiled and fell on her shoulder like a dark-hued serpent. The lamp burned for a long time still in Anna Sergyéevna's chamber, and for a long time she remained motionless, only now

and then passing her fingers over her arms, which the night air stung rather sharply.

But Bazároff two hours later returned to his room with boots damp from the dew, dishevelled and surly. He found Arkády at the writing-table with a book in his hands and his coat buttoned to the throat.

"Thou art not yet in bed?"—he said, as though in vexation.

"Thou hast sat a long time this evening with Anna Sergyéevna,"—remarked Arkády, without replying to his question.

"Yes, I was sitting with her all the while that you and Katerína Sergyéevna were playing on the piano."

"I was not playing . . . ." began Arkády, and stopped short. He felt the tears welling up in his eyes and he did not wish to weep in the presence of his jeering friend.

XVIII

On the following day, when Madame Odíntzoff made her appearance at tea, Bazároff sat for a long time bent over his cup, then suddenly cast a glance at her. . . She turned toward him, as though he had nudged her, and it seemed to him that her face had grown somewhat paler overnight. She soon went away to her own room and did not appear again until breakfast. From early morning the weather had been rainy, and walking was impossible. The whole company assembled in the drawing-room. Arkády got the last number of the newspaper and began to read aloud. The Princess, according to her wont, first expressed amazement on her face, exactly as though he were plotting something improper, then riveted her eyes maliciously upon him; but he paid no attention to her.

"Evgény Vasílievitch,"—said Anna Sergyéevna,—"come to my room. . . . . I want to ask you . . . . you mentioned yesterday a guide . . ."

She rose and went toward the door. The Princess glanced around with an expression which seemed to say, "Look, look, how astonished I am!" and again bored her eyes into Arkády, but

he raised his voice, and exchanging a glance with Kátya, beside whom he was sitting, went on reading.

Madame Odíntzoff, with hasty steps, betook herself to her boudoir. Bazároff briskly followed her, without raising his eyes, and merely catching with his ear the faint whirr and rustle of her silken gown, which was gliding on in front of him. Madame Odíntzoff dropped into the same arm-chair in which she had sat on the preceding evening, and Bazároff resumed his former place.

"So what is the title of that book?"—she began, after a brief silence.

"Pelouze et Frémy, 'Notions Générales,'" . . . replied Bazároff.—"But I can also recommend to you Ganot, 'Traité élémentaire de Physique Expérimentale.' In this work the illustrations are exact, and, on the whole, that manual . . . . ."

Madame Odíntzoff stretched out her hand.—"Evgény Vasílievitch, pardon me, but I have not summoned you hither for the purpose of discussing manuals. I wished to renew our conversation of last night. You went away so suddenly. . . You will not find it irksome?"

"I am at your service, Anna Sergyéevna. But, dear me, what was it we were talking about last night?"

Madame Odíntzoff cast a sidelong glance at Bazároff.—"We were talking about happiness, I believe. I was telling you about myself. By

the way, I have mentioned the word 'happiness.' Tell me why, even when we are enjoying music, for example, a fine evening, a conversation with sympathetic persons,—why does it all seem rather a hint of some illimitable happiness, which exists somewhere or other, than real happiness—that is, the sort such as we ourselves possess? Why is this? Or, perhaps, you do not feel anything of that sort?"

"You know the adage: 'That place is fair where we are not,'"—returned Bazároff;—"besides, you yourself said last night that you are dissatisfied. And, as a matter of fact, such thoughts do not enter my head."

"Perhaps they seem ridiculous to you?"

"No, but they do not enter my head."

"Really? Do you know, I should very much like to know what *you* think about?"

"What? I do not understand you."

"Listen, I have long wanted to have an explanation with you. There is no necessity for telling you—you know that yourself—that you do not belong to the class of ordinary men:—you are still young—all life is before you. For what are you preparing yourself? What future awaits you? I mean to say—what goal do you wish to attain? whither are you going? what have you in your soul?—in a word, who are you? what are you?"

"You amaze me, Anna Sergyéevna. You

know that I am occupied with the natural sciences. And as to who I am . . . ."

" Yes, who are you? "

" I have already informed you that I am to be a country doctor."

Anna Sergyéevna made a movement of impatience.—" Why do you say that? You do not believe that yourself. Arkády might answer me in that manner, but not you."

" But why should Arkády . . . . ."

" Will you stop? Is it possible that you are satisfied with so humble an activity, and are not you yourself forever asserting that medicine does not exist for you? You—with your pride—a district doctor! You answer me in that way with the object of getting rid of me because you have no confidence in me. But do you know, Evgény Vasílitch, I have learned to understand you: I myself have been poor and proud, like you; I have passed, perhaps, through the same trials as you."

" All that is very fine, Anna Sergyéevna, but you must excuse me; . . . in general, I have not been used to expressing myself; and between you and me there is such a gulf . . . . ."

" What gulf?—Are you going to tell me again that I am an aristocrat? Enough. Evgény Vasílitch; it seems to me that I have demonstrated to you . . . . ."

" Yes, and in addition to that,"—interrupted

Bazároff,—"what is the use of discussing a future, which, in the main, does not depend on us? If an opportunity to do something fine should turn up—very good; and if it does not turn up—at all events, one can be satisfied that one has not prated uselessly in advance. . ."

"You call a friendly chat prating . . . . or, perhaps, you do not regard me as a woman worthy of your confidence? You scorn us all, you know."

"I do not scorn you, Anna Sergyéevna, you know that."

"No, I know nothing. . . . But let us assume that I understand your reluctance to talk about your future vocation; but what is taking place in you at the present moment . . . . ."

"Taking place!"—repeated Bazároff,—"as though I were some kingdom or other, or a society! In any case, it is not in the least interesting; and, moreover, can a man always say aloud everything that is 'taking place in him'?"

"But I do not see why it is impossible to speak out everything which one has on one's soul."

"Can *you?*"—inquired Bazároff.

"I can,"—replied Anna Sergyéevna, after a slight hesitation.

Bazároff bowed his head.—"You are more fortunate than I."

Anna Sergyéevna looked inquiringly at him.—"As you like,"—she went on;—"but, nevertheless, something tells me that it is not for nothing

that we have become intimate, that we shall be good friends. I am convinced that—how shall I say it—this intensity, this reserve of yours, will vanish in the end."

"And have you noticed in me reserve . . . how was it you expressed it . . . intensity?"

"Yes."

Bazároff rose and went to the window.—"And you would like to know the cause of that reserve?—you would like to know what is taking place in me?"

"Yes,"—repeated Madame Odíntzoff, with a certain alarm, which had hitherto been unknown to her.

"And you will not be angry?"

"No."

"No?"—Bazároff was standing with his back to her.—"Then you must know that I love you stupidly, madly. . . That is what you have been trying to get."

Madame Odíntzoff stretched both arms out in front of her, but Bazároff leaned his brow against the window-pane. He was suffocating; his whole body was visibly quivering. But this was not the quiver of youthful timidity, not the sweet terror of the first confession, which had taken possession of him; it was passion throbbing in him, strong and heavy—passion resembling wrath, and, perhaps, allied to it. . . . . Madame Odíntzoff was terrified at him, and sorry for him.

"Evgény Vasílitch,"—she said, and involuntary tenderness resounded in her voice.

He wheeled hastily round, flung a devouring glance at her,—and seizing both her hands, suddenly drew her to his breast.

She did not immediately free herself from his embrace; but a moment later she was standing far away in a corner and gazing thence at Bazároff. He rushed toward her. . . .

"You have not understood me aright,"—she whispered in swift alarm. It seemed to her that if he took another step she should shriek.—Bazároff bit his lip and left the room.

Half an hour later a maid handed Anna Sergyéevna a note from Bazároff; it consisted of only a single line: "Am I to go away to-day—or may I stay until to-morrow?"—"Why go away? I did not understand you—you did not understand me,"—Anna Sergyéevna replied to him, and thought to herself, "And I did not understand myself either."

She did not show herself until dinner, and kept pacing back and forth in her room with her hands crossed behind her, halting from time to time, now in front of the window, then in front of the mirror, and slowly passing her handkerchief over her neck, on which she still seemed to feel a burning spot. She asked herself what had made her "try to get," to use Bazároff's expression, his frankness, and whether she had not suspected any-

thing. . . . "I am to blame,"—she said aloud, "but I could not foresee this." She fell into thought, and blushed, as she recalled Bazároff's almost fierce face when he had rushed at her. . . .

"Or?"—she suddenly articulated, and halted and shook her curls. . . . She beheld herself in the mirror; her head thrown back, with a smile on the half-parted, half-closed eyes and lips, seemed, at that moment, to be saying something to her which reduced her to confusion. . . .

"No," she decided at last,—"God knows whither that would have led; I must not jest with that; after all, tranquillity is better than anything else in the world."

Her composure was not shaken; but she grew sad and even wept once, not knowing herself why, only not from the insult which had been dealt her. She did not feel herself insulted: she felt herself, rather, culpable. Under the influence of divers confused sensations, the consciousness of vanishing life, the desire for novelty, she forced herself to toe the appointed mark, made herself look further—and beheld beyond it not even a chasm, but a void . . . . or a horror.

XIX

Mistress of herself as she was, high as she stood above all prejudices, yet Madame Odíntzoff felt awkward when she presented herself in the dining-room for dinner. However, it passed off quite successfully. Porfíry Platónitch came and told various anecdotes; he had only just returned from the town. Among other things, he informed them that the governor, Bourdaloue, had ordered his officials for special commissions to wear spurs, by way of expediting matters, in case he should despatch them anywhere on horseback. Arkády chatted with Kátya in a subdued voice and listened diplomatically to the Princess. Bazároff preserved a sullen and persistent silence. Madame Odíntzoff looked twice—not stealthily, but directly—at his face, stern and bitter, with lowered eyes, with the stamp of scornful decision on every feature, and thought, "No . . . . no . . . no. . . ." After dinner she and the entire company went into the garden, and, perceiving that Bazároff wanted to speak with her, she went a few paces aside and stopped. He approached her, but even then he did not raise his eyes, and said dully:

"I have a confession to make to you, Anna Sergyéevna. You cannot but be angry with me."

"No, I am not angry with you, Evgény Vasílitch,"—replied Madame Odíntzoff; "but I am grieved."

"So much the worse. In any case, I am sufficiently punished. My position, as you will probably agree with me, is extremely stupid. You have written to me: 'Why go?' But I cannot and will not stay. To-morrow I shall be gone."

"Evgény Vasílitch, why are you . . . ."

"Why am I going?"

"No, that was not what I meant to say."

"The past cannot be brought back, Anna Sergyéevna; . . . and sooner or later this must have happened. Consequently, I must go. I understand only one condition under which I could remain; but that condition will never come to pass. For you—pardon my audacity—do not love me, and will never love me."

Bazároff's eyes flashed for a moment beneath his gloomy brows.

Anna Sergyéevna did not answer him. "I am afraid of this man," flashed through her head.

"Farewell, madam," said Bazároff, as though divining her thought, and wended his way to the house.

Anna Sergyéevna quietly followed him, and calling Kátya, took her arm. . . She did not detach herself from her until evening. She did not

play cards, and laughed a great deal, which did not match at all with her pallid, agitated face. Arkády was nonplussed and watched her, as young men watch; that is to say, he incessantly asked himself: "What is the meaning of this?" Bazároff locked himself up in his room; but he came out for tea. Anna Sergyéevna tried to utter some kind word to him, but she did not know how to begin the conversation with him. . . .

An unforeseen incident extricated her from her dilemma: the butler announced the arrival of Sítnikoff.

It is difficult to convey in words the quail-like manner in which the youthful progressist flew into the room. Having made up his mind, with the audacity peculiar to him, to drive to the country-house of a woman whom he hardly knew, who had never invited him, but who was entertaining —according to the information he had gathered— persons who were so clever and so near to him, he was, nevertheless, intimidated to the very marrow of his bones, and, instead of uttering, to begin with, the conventional excuses and greetings, he stammered out some nonsense or other, to the effect that Evdóksiya Kukshín had sent him to inquire after the health of Anna Sergyéevna, and that Arkády Nikoláevitch also had always expressed himself to him in the most laudatory terms. . . . At this point he broke down and became confused to such a degree that he sat down

on his own hat. But, as no one drove him out, and Anna Sergyéevna even introduced him to her aunt and her sister, he speedily recovered himself and chattered away famously. The appearance of the commonplace is often useful in life: it relieves the tension of chords too highly strung, its sobers self-conceited or self-forgetful feelings by reminding them of their close connection with it. With Sítnikoff's arrival everything became more stupid and more simple; every one even ate a more hearty supper, and they went off to bed half an hour earlier than usual.

"I can repeat to thee now,"—said Arkády, as he got into bed, to Bazároff, who was also undressed,—"that which thou saidst to me one day: 'Why art thou so sad? assuredly, thou hast fulfilled some sacred duty?'"—for some time past a sort of hypocritically free and easy jesting had been established between the two young men, which always serves as a sign of secret displeasure or of unuttered suspicions.

"I 'm going off to my father to-morrow,"—said Bazároff.

Arkády half sat up and propped himself on his elbow. For some reason or other, he was both astonished and delighted.—"Ah!"—he ejaculated.—"And is that what makes thee sad?"

Bazároff yawned.—"If thou knowest too much, thou wilt grow old."

"And how about Anna Sergyéevna?"—went on Arkády.

"What dost thou mean about Anna Sergyéevna?"

"I mean to say, is it possible that she will allow thee to go?"

"I have not tied myself to her."

Arkády reflected, but Bazároff got into bed and turned his face to the wall.

Several minutes elapsed in silence. "Evgény!"—exclaimed Arkády suddenly.

"Well?"

"I 'm going away with thee to-morrow."

Bazároff made no answer.

"Only I am going home,"—pursued Arkády.—"We will go together as far as the Khokhlóff settlement, and there thou canst get horses from Feodót. I should be glad to make the acquaintance of thy people, but I am afraid of incommoding them and thee. Thou wilt come back to us later on, wilt thou not?"

"I left my things at thy house,"—replied Bazároff, without turning round.

"Why does n 't he ask me why I am going? and as suddenly as himself?" thought Arkády. "As a matter of fact, why am I going? and why is he going?" he pursued his meditations. He could not give a satisfactory reply to his own question, but his heart was filled to overflowing with a caustic sensation.

He felt that it was painful to him to part with that life to which he had grown so accustomed; but to remain alone would seem somewhat strange. "What has taken place between them?"—he argued the matter with himself; "and why should I show myself before her after his departure? I shall make her tired of me for good and all; and I shall lose my last hold." He began to picture to himself Anna Sergyéevna, and then other features gradually pierced their way through the lovely image of the young widow.

"I 'm sorry for Kátya, too!"—whispered Arkády to his pillow, on which a tear had already fallen. . . . He suddenly flung back his hair and said aloud:

"What the devil did that blockhead Sítnikoff come for?"

Bazároff first moved in his bed and then emitted the following:—"Thou, brother, art still stupid, I perceive. Sítnikoffs are indispensable to us. I—mark this—I need such dolts. Really, it is not the business of the gods to bake pots! . ."

"Aha, ha! . . . ." thought Arkády to himself, and only then was the whole bottomless abyss of Bazároff's pride disclosed to him for an instant. "So thou and I are gods? that is—thou art a god, and am I the dolt, I wonder?"

"Yes,"—repeated Bazároff grimly,—"thou art still stupid."

Madame Odíntzoff did not manifest any particular surprise when, on the following day, Arkády told her that he was going away with Bazároff; she seemed preoccupied and weary. Kátya gazed silently and seriously at him, the Princess even crossed herself under her shawl, so that he might not perceive it, but Sítnikoff, on the other hand, was thoroughly alarmed. He had just come to breakfast in a new, dandified outfit, which, on this occasion, was not Slavyanophil; on the previous evening he had astonished the man appointed to wait on him by the amount of body-linen he had brought, and, all of a sudden, his comrades were abandoning him! He danced up and down a little and rushed about like a hunted hare at the edge of the forest,—and suddenly, almost with terror, almost with a shriek, announced that he intended to leave. Madame Odíntzoff did not attempt to dissuade him.

"I have a very easy calash,"—added the unhappy young man, turning to Arkády.—"I can drive you, and Evgény Vasílitch can take your tarantás, as it will be more convenient that way."

"But good gracious, it is not on your road at all, and I live far away."

"That makes no difference, no difference; I have plenty of time, and, moreover, I have business in that direction."

"Connected with the liquor monopoly?"—inquired Arkády, quite too disdainfully.

But Sítnikoff was in such a state of despair that, contrary to his wont, he did not even smile. —"I assure you my calash is extremely easy," —he stammered,—"and there will be room for all."

"Do not grieve Monsieur Sítnikoff by refusing,"—said Anna Sergyéevna. . . .

Arkády glanced at her and significantly bowed his head.

The visitors took their departure after breakfast.

As she bade Bazároff good-bye, Madame Odíntzoff offered him her hand and said,—"We shall see each other again, shall we not?"

"At your command,"—replied Bazároff.

"In that case, we shall meet again."

Arkády was the first to emerge upon the porch: he climbed into Sítnikoff's calash. The butler respectfully assisted him, but it would have given him great satisfaction to beat the man, or to weep. Bazároff took his place in the tarantás. When they reached the Khokhlóff settlement, Arkády waited until Feodót, the keeper of the posting-station, had harnessed the horses, and, approaching the tarantás, said to Bazároff with his smile as of old, "Evgény, take me with thee; I want to go to thy house."

"Get in,"—articulated Bazároff between his teeth.

Sítnikoff, who was walking up and down, whis-

tling energetically around the wheels of his calash, merely gaped when he heard these words, but Arkády coolly took his things out of the calash, seated himself beside Bazároff,—and, politely saluting his previous travelling companion, shouted, "Drive on!" The tarantás rolled off and soon disappeared from view. . . . Sítnikoff, thoroughly discomfited, looked at his coachman, but the latter was making the tail of his whip-lash play over the side horse. Then Sítnikoff sprang into his calash, and thundering out at two passing peasants: "Put on your caps, you fools!"—dragged himself off to the town, where he arrived very late, and where, on the following day at Madame Kukshín's, the two "disgusting, proud boors" caught it heavily.

As he took his seat in the tarantás beside Bazároff, Arkády pressed his hand warmly, and for a long time said nothing. Bazároff appeared to understand and value both the pressure and the silence. He had not slept all the preceding night, and for several days past he had not smoked, and had eaten almost nothing. His haggard profile stood out gloomily and sharply from beneath his cap, which was pulled down over his eyes.

"Well, brother,"—he said at last,—"give me a cigar. . . . And look, see if my tongue is yellow."

"It is,"—replied Arkády.

"Well, yes, ... and the cigar has no flavour. The machine is out of order."

"Thou really hast changed of late,"—remarked Arkády.

"Never mind! we shall right ourselves. One thing is a bore,—my mother is such a tender-hearted woman: if your paunch has n't grown big and you don't eat ten times a day, she simply pines. Well, my father is all right; he has been through all sorts of things himself. No, it is impossible to smoke,"—he added, and flung his cigar into the dust of the highway.

"It is twenty-five versts to thy estate?"—asked Arkády.

"Yes. But ask that wiseacre there."—He pointed at the peasant on the box, Feodót's hired man.

But the wiseacre replied: "Who knows?—the versts are not measured,"—with his queer accent, and went on reviling the shaft-horse because it jerked its head.

"Yes, yes,"—began Bazároff,—"a lesson for you, my young friend, a sort of edifying example. The devil knows what nonsense it is! Every man hangs on a hair, the abyss may yawn beneath him at any moment, and he invents all sorts of unpleasant things for himself to boot; he ruins his own life."

"At what art thou hinting?"—inquired Arkády.

"I 'm not hinting at anything; I 'm saying straight out that both you and I have been behaving very stupidly. What 's the use of explaining! But I have already observed in the clinic that if any one gets angry at his pain, that man infallibly conquers it."

"I do not understand thee in the least,"—said Arkády.—"I should not think thou hadst any cause to complain."

"And if thou dost not understand me in the least, then I will tell thee this: In my opinion, it is better to break stones on the highway than to permit a woman to take possession of even so much as the tip of thy finger. That 's all. . ."

Bazároff came near uttering his favourite word, "romanticism"—but restrained himself, and said, "nonsense.—Thou wilt not believe me now, but I will tell thee: thou and I have fallen into feminine society, and we have found it agreeable; but to abandon such society is like drenching one's self with cold water on a hot day.—A man has no time to occupy himself with such trifles; a man ought to be ferocious, says a capital Spanish proverb. I suppose, wiseacre,"—he added, addressing the peasant on the box,—"that thou hast a wife?"

The peasant exhibited his flat, mole-eyed face to the two friends.

"A wife? Yes. How could I be without a wife?"

"Dost thou beat her?"

"My wife? All sorts of things happen. We don't beat her without cause."

"And that is well. Well, and does she beat thee?"

The peasant twitched the reins.—"What a word thou hast said, master. Thou wilt keep jesting. . . ." Obviously, he was offended.

Arkády laughed in a constrained way, and Bazároff turned aside and never opened his mouth again the whole way.

The five and twenty versts seemed to Arkády fully fifty. But at last, on the declivity of a sloping hill, a tiny hamlet was revealed to view, where dwelt the parents of Bazároff. Alongside of it, in a young birch grove, a small manor-house with a thatched roof was visible. By the first cottage stood two peasants with their caps on quarrelling. "Thou art a big hog,"—said one to the other.—"But thou art worse than a small sucking-pig."—"And thy wife is a witch," retorted the other.

"From the unceremoniousness of their intercourse,"—remarked Bazároff to Arkády,—"and from the playful turns of their speech, thou canst judge that my father's serfs are not too much oppressed. But yonder is he himself coming out on the porch of his dwelling. He must have heard the carriage-bell. 'T is he, 't is he,—I recognise his figure. Ehe, he! but how grey he has grown, poor man!"

XX

Bazároff leaned out of the tarantás, and Arkády thrust his head out behind his friend's back and perceived on the little porch of the manor-house a tall, thin man, with dishevelled hair, and a thin, aquiline nose, clad in an old military coat open on the breast. He was standing with his legs far apart smoking a long pipe and blinking at the sun.

The horses came to a halt.

"Thou art come, at last,"—said Bazároff's father, still continuing to smoke, although his chibouque fairly leaped in his fingers.—"Come, get out, get out, we will embrace and kiss."

He began to embrace his son. . . . "Eniúsha, Eniúsha," rang out a quavering female voice. The door flew open and on the threshold appeared a plump, short old woman, in a white cap, and a short, motley-hued jacket. She cried out and staggered, and certainly would have fallen had not Bazároff supported her. Her plump arms instantly twined themselves around his neck, her head pressed close to his breast, and all became still. Nothing was audible, save her broken sobs.

Old Bazároff drew deep breaths and blinked worse than before.

"Come, enough, enough, Arísha! stop,"—he said, exchanging a glance with Arkády, who stood motionless by the tarantás, while the peasant on the box even turned away:—"This is not in the least necessary! please stop."

"Akh, Vasíly Iványitch,"—stammered the old woman,—"it 's an age since I have seen my darling, my Eniúshenka . . ." and, without releasing her arms, she turned her face, all wet with tears, agitated and moved, from Bazároff, gazed at him with blissful and comical eyes, and again fell upon his breast.

"Well, yes, of course, this is all in the nature of things,"—said Vasíly Iványitch,—"only we had better go into the house. A visitor has come with Evgény. Excuse me,"—he added, turning to Arkády, and with a slight scrape of the foot,—"you understand woman's weakness; well, and the mother's heart . . . . ."

But his own lips and eyebrows were twitching and his chin was quivering; . . . . but he was evidently trying to control himself and to appear almost indifferent. Arkády saluted him.

"Come, mother, really now,"—said Bazároff, and led the feeble old woman into the house. After seating her in a comfortable arm-chair, he once more hastily embraced his father, and introduced Arkády to him.

"I am heartily glad to make your acquaintance,"—said Vasíly Ivánovitch,—"only be not

exacting: everything here in my house is simple, on a military footing. Arína Vlásievna, do me the favour to calm thyself: what pusillanimity is this? Our guest must think hardly of thee."

"Dear little father,"—said the old woman, through her tears:—"I have not the honour to know your name and patronymic. . . . ."

"Arkády Nikoláitch," Vasíly Iványitch pompously prompted her, in an undertone.

"Excuse me, I 'm stupid." The old woman blew her nose and, bending her head now to the right, now to the left, carefully wiped first one eye, then the other. "You must excuse me. You see I thought I should die before I saw my da . . . a . . . a . . arling."

"But now you have lived to see him, madam,"—put in Vasíly Iványitch.—"Tániushka," he said, addressing a barefooted girl of thirteen, in a bright scarlet print gown, who was peeping timidly from behind the door,—"fetch the mistress a glass of water—on a salver, dost thou hear?—and you, gentlemen,"—he added, with a certain old-fashioned playfulness,—"allow me to invite you into the study of a veteran in retreat."

"Let me hug thee just a little more, Eniúshetchka,"—moaned Arína Vlásievna. Bazároff bent over her. "But what a beauty thou hast grown to be!"

"Well, he 's not exactly a beauty,"—remarked Vasíly Iványitch;—"but he 's a man; as the say-

ing is, *homme fait.* But now, I hope, Arína Vlásievna, that, after having satiated thy maternal heart, thou wilt attend to the feeding of thy dear guests, because, as thou knowest, it is not fitting to feed a nightingale on fables." [1]

The old woman rose from her chair.—"This very moment, Vasíly Iványitch, the table will be set; I will run to the kitchen myself and order the samovár to be prepared; they shall have everything, everything. Why, it 's three years since I saw him, fed him, gave him to drink, and is that easy to bear?"

"Well, see to it, housewife; bustle about and do not put thyself to shame; and do you, gentlemen, be so good as to follow me. Here 's Timoféitch has presented himself to greet thee, Evgény. And he 's delighted, I think, the old watch-dog. What? thou art delighted, art thou not, old watch-dog? I pray you to follow me."

And Vasíly Iványitch bustled on ahead, shuffling and dragging his patched slippers.

His entire little house consisted of six tiny rooms. One of them, the one into which he led our friends, was called the study. A fat-legged table, with an accumulation of dust which had turned black with age, with documents which looked as though they had been smoked, occupied the entire space between the two windows; on the walls hung Turkish guns, kazák whips, sabres,

[1] "Fair words butter no parsnips."—TRANSLATOR.

two maps, several anatomical drawings, a portrait of Hufeland, a monogram of hair in a black frame, and a diploma under glass; a leather-covered couch, crushed down and tattered in spots, stood between two huge cupboards of Karelian birch wood; on the shelves, in disorder, were crowded books, small boxes, stuffed birds, bottles and phials; in one corner stood a broken electrical machine.

"I warned you, my dear visitor,"—began Vasíly Iványitch,—"that we live here, so to speak, in bivouac. . ."

"Come, stop that, why dost thou make apologies?"—interrupted Bazároff.—"Kirsánoff is very well aware that thou and I are not Crœsuses, and that thou hast not a palace. Where are we to put him, that 's the question?"

"Good gracious, Evgény; there is a capital chamber yonder in my wing; he will be very comfortable there."

"So thou hast set up a wing?"

"Of course, sir; where the bath is, sir,"—put in Timoféitch.

"That is to say, alongside the bath,"—hastily subjoined Vasíly Iványitch.—"But it is summer now. . . . I 'll run over there at once and arrange things; and, in the meantime, Timoféitch, thou hadst better bring in their things. Of course I place my study at thy disposal, Evgény. *Suum cuique.*"

"There you have it! A very amusing old man, and as kind as possible,"—added Bazároff, as soon as Vasíly Ivánitch left the room.—"Just such another eccentric as thy father, only after another fashion. He chatters a great deal."

"And thy mother, apparently, is a very fine woman,"—remarked Arkády.

"Yes, she 's a guileless creature. Just watch what a dinner she 'll give us!"

"You were not expected to-day, dear little father; they have brought no beef,"—said Timoféitch, who had just dragged in Bazároff's trunk.

"We 'll get along without the beef; if there is none, it cannot be helped. Poverty, as the adage goes, is no crime."

"How many souls[1] has thy father?"—suddenly inquired Arkády.

"The estate does not belong to him, but to my mother; there are fifteen souls, if I remember rightly."

"There are twenty-two in all,"—remarked Timoféitch with displeasure.

The scuffling of slippers became audible, and Vasíly Ivánitch made his appearance again. "In a few minutes your chamber will be ready to receive you,"—he exclaimed triumphantly,—"Arkády . . . . Nikoláitch? I believe that is what you deign to be called? And here 's a servant for you,"—he added, pointing at a boy with closely-

[1] Male serfs.—Translator.

clipped hair in a blue kaftan which was torn on the elbows, and some one else's shoes, who had entered with him.—" His name is Fédka. Again I repeat it,—although my son forbids me,—be not exacting. However, he knows how to fill a pipe. You smoke, of course?"

" I smoke chiefly cigars,"—replied Arkády.

" And you behave very sensibly. I myself give the preference to cigars, but in our remote region it is extremely difficult to obtain them."

" Come, have done with singing Lazarus,"—interrupted Bazároff once more. " Thou hadst better sit down there on the couch and let me have a look at thee.

Vasíly Iványitch laughed and sat down. He greatly resembled his son in face, only his forehead was lower and narrower and his mouth somewhat wider, and he kept in incessant motion, twitched his shoulders as though his coat cut him under the arms, winked, coughed and twiddled his fingers, while his son was distinguished from him by a certain careless impassivity.

" Singing Lazarus!"—repeated Vasíly Iványitch. " Thou must not think, Evgény, that I am trying to move our guest to pity, so to speak; as much as to say,—just see in what a desolate hole we live. On the contrary, I hold the opinion that for a rational man there is no such thing as a desolate hole. At all events, I try, to the extent of my

ability, not to get moss-grown, as the saying is, not to lag behind the age."

Vasíly Iványitch pulled from his pocket a new yellow bandana handkerchief, which he had contrived to catch up as he ran to Arkády's room, and proceeded as he flourished it in the air:—"I am not speaking of the fact that I, for example, not without sensible sacrifices on my own part, have put my peasants on quit-rent and have given them my lands by halves. I regarded that as my duty, common sense itself commands it in this case, although other proprietors are not even thinking of it: I am speaking of the sciences of culture."

"Yes; I see thou hast yonder 'The Friend of Health' for 1855," remarked Bazároff.

"A comrade sent it to me, for old acquaintance's sake,"—said Vasíly Iványitch;—"but we have some conception of phrenology,"—he added, addressing himself, however, more particularly to Arkády, and pointing at a small plaster head which stood on the cupboard broken up into numbered squares.—"Schönlein also has not remained unknown to us—and Rademacher."

"And do people still believe in Rademacher in the * * * Government?" asked Bazároff.

Vasíly Iványitch began to cough.—"In the Government . . . . Of course, gentlemen, you know best; how can we vie with you? You have

come to supersede us, you see. And in my time, also, a certain humouralist Hoffman, and a certain Brown, with his vitalism, seemed very ridiculous, but they had made a great noise once upon a time. Some new person has taken Rademacher's place with you; you bow down before him, and twenty years hence, probably, people will laugh at him also."

"I will tell thee, for thy consolation,"—said Bazároff,—"that nowadays we laugh at medicine in general, and we bow down before no one."

"How is that? Surely thou art going to be a doctor?"

"I am, but the one does not prevent the other."

Vasíly Ivánitch poked his third finger into his pipe, where a little burning ashes still lingered.—"Well, perhaps, perhaps—I will not contradict. For what am I?—A retired staff-doctor, *voilà tout,* and now turned agriculturist.—I served in your grandfather's brigade,"—he addressed himself once more to Arkády.—"Yes, sir; yes, sir; I have seen many sights in my day. And in what company have not I been, with whom have not I consorted!—I, this very I, whom you are pleased to see before you, I have felt the pulse of Prince Wittgenstein and of Zhukóvsky! I used to know every one of those men, in the army of the South, in the year 'fourteen, you understand" (here Vasíly Ivánitch pursed up his lips significantly). "Well, and of course my business lay apart;

know how to use your lancet and that 's enough! But your grandfather was a very greatly respected man, a genuine warrior."

" Confess, he was a good deal of a blockhead," —said Bazároff lazily.

" Akh, Evgény, how thou dost express thyself! do show mercy. . . Of course General Kirsánoff did not belong to the number . . . ."

" Well, drop him,"—interrupted Bazároff.— " As I drove hither I rejoiced at thy birch grove; it has spread splendidly."

Vasíly Iványitch grew animated.—"And see what a nice little garden I have now! I planted every tree myself. There are fruits in it and berries, and all sorts of medicinal herbs. Be as artful as you may, young gentlemen, nevertheless old Paracelsus uttered the sacred truth: *in herbis, verbis et lapidibus.* . . For I, as thou knowest, have given up practice and am obliged to recall my youth a couple of times a week. People come for advice,—one cannot turn them out neck and crop. It sometimes happens that poor people come for aid. And there are no doctors at all here. One of the neighbours, just fancy, a retired major, also makes cures. I ask about him: has he studied medicine? I am told: no, he has not studied; he does it mainly from philanthropic motives. . . . Ha, ha, from philanthropic motives! Hey? What do you think of that? Ha, ha! Ha, ha!"

"Fédka! fill my pipe!" said Bazároff sharply.

"And sometimes another doctor here comes to the patient,"—went on Vasíly Iványitch, with a sort of desperation,—"but the patient has already departed *ad patres;* and his servant does not admit the doctor; he says: 'You 're not needed now.' The doctor has not expected that; he gets confused, and asks: 'Did your master hiccough before his death?'—'He did, sir.'—'And did he hiccough a great deal?'—'Yes.'—'Ah, well, that 's good,'—and right about face back. Ha, ha, ha!"

The old man was the only one who laughed; Arkády indicated a smile on his face. Bazároff merely stretched himself. The conversation was prolonged after this fashion for about an hour; Arkády managed to get away to his room, which proved to be the anteroom of the bath, but very comfortable and clean. At last Tániusha entered and announced that dinner was ready.

Vasíly Iványitch was the first to rise.—"Come, gentlemen! Be so generous as to forgive me, if you have been bored. Perhaps my housewife will satisfy you better than I have done."

The dinner, although hastily prepared, turned out to be very good, even abundant; only the wine was rather bad: the almost black sherry, purchased by Timoféitch in the town from a merchant of his acquaintance, had a flavour which was not precisely that of brass, nor yet of resin; and the flies too were a nuisance. At ordinary times

the boy house-serf drove them off with a big green bough; but on this occasion Vasíly Iványitch had sent him away for fear of criticism on the part of the younger generation. Arína Vlásievna had succeeded in arraying herself; she had donned a tall cap with silken ribbons, and a blue shawl with a flowered pattern. She fell to weeping again as soon as she caught sight of her Eniúsha, but her husband was not obliged to exhort her: she wiped her tears away as promptly as possible, lest she should spoil her shawl. The young men alone ate: the master and mistress of the house had dined long before. Fédka waited on them, evidently oppressed by his unwonted boots, and he was assisted by a woman with a masculine face, who was also blind of one eye, Anfísushka by name, who discharged the duties of housekeeper, poultry-woman and laundress. Vasíly Iványitch paced up and down the room during the whole duration of the dinner, and with a thoroughly happy and even blissful aspect talked about the grave apprehensions with which the policy of Napoleon inspired him and the complications of the Italian question. Arína Vlásievna did not perceive Arkády, did not urge him to eat; with her fist propping up her round face, to which her puffy, cherry-coloured lips and the moles on her cheeks and above her eyebrows imparted a very good-natured expression, she never took her eyes off her son, and sighed constantly; she was dying

to find out for how long a time he had come, but she was afraid to ask him. "Well, he will say—'For a couple of days,'" she thought, and her heart died within her. After the roast, Vasíly Iványitch disappeared for a moment and returned with an uncorked half bottle of champagne. "Here,"—he exclaimed,—"although we do live in the wilds, still, on festive occasions, we have something wherewith to cheer ourselves!" He poured out three glasses and a wine-glass full, proposed the health "of our inestimable visitors," and having tossed off his glass at once in military fashion, he made Arína Vlásievna drain her wine-glass to the last drop. When the preserves were brought on, Arkády, who could not endure anything sweet, nevertheless considered it his duty to taste four different sorts, the more so as Bazároff flatly declined them, and immediately lighted a cigar. Then tea made its appearance on the scene, accompanied by cream, butter and cracknels; then Vasíly Iványitch led them all into the garden, to enjoy the beauty of the evening. As they passed a bench he whispered to Arkády,—"On this spot I love to philosophise, as I gaze at the sunset: that is befitting a hermit. And further on, yonder, I have planted several of the trees beloved by Horace."

"What sort of trees?"—asked Bazároff, who was listening.

"Why . . . . acacias, of course."

Bazároff began to yawn.

"I suppose it is time for the travellers to betake themselves to the arms of Morpheus,"—remarked Vasíly Iványitch.

"That is to say, it is time to go to bed,"—put in Bazároff.—"That reasoning is correct. It is time, in fact."

When he bade his mother good-night, he kissed her on the brow,—and she embraced him and blessed him thrice with the sign of the cross stealthily behind his back. Vasíly Iványitch escorted Arkády to his chamber and wished him "the same sort of beneficent repose which I used to enjoy at your age." And, in fact, Arkády slept capitally in his bath vestibule. It was redolent of mint, and two crickets vied with each other in chirping away soporifically behind the stove. Vasíly Iványitch, on leaving Arkády, went to his study, and curling himself up on the couch at his son's feet, prepared to have a chat with him; but Bazároff immediately sent him away, saying that he felt sleepy; but he did not get to sleep until morning. With widely-opened eyes he stared angrily into the darkness: memories of his childhood had no dominion over him, and, moreover, he had not yet succeeded in detaching himself from his last bitter impressions. Arína Vlásievna first prayed to her heart's content; then she had a long, long conference with Anfísushka, who, standing in front

of her mistress as though rooted to the spot and with her solitary eye riveted upon her, communicated to her in a mysterious whisper all her observations and conclusions regarding Evgény Vasílievitch. The old lady's head was all in a whirl from joy, wine, and cigar-smoke; her husband tried to talk to her, but gave it up in despair.

Arína Vlásievna was a genuine Russian gentlewoman of the petty nobility of days gone by; she ought to have lived a couple of hundred years earlier, in the times of ancient Moscow. She was very devout and sentimental, she believed in all sorts of omens, divinations, spells, dreams; she believed in holy simpletons,[1] in house-demons, in forest-demons, in evil encounters, in the evil eye, in popular remedies, in salt prepared in a special manner on Great Thursday[2] in the speedy end of the world; she believed that if the tapers did not go out at the Vigil Service at Easter the buckwheat would bear a heavy crop, and that a mushroom will not grow any more if a human eye descries it; she believed that the devil is fond of being where there is water, and that every Jew has a bloody spot on his breast; she was afraid of mice, snakes, frogs, sparrows, leeches, thunder, cold water, draughts, horses, goats, red-haired people, and black cats, and regarded crickets and

[1] Half-witted men were formerly regarded in Russia as divinely inspired, almost in the light of prophets. — TRANSLATOR.

[2] The Thursday before Good Friday: called Maundy Thursday in the Western Church. — TRANSLATOR.

dogs as unclean animals; she ate neither veal, nor pigeons,[1] nor crabs, nor cheese, nor asparagus, nor artichokes, nor watermelons, because a watermelon when it is cut reminds one of the head of John the Baptist; and she never mentioned oysters otherwise than with a shudder; she was fond of eating—and fasted strictly; she slept ten hours a day—and never went to bed at all if Vasíly Iványitch had a headache; she had never read a single book, except "Alexis, or the Cottage in the Forest"; she wrote one letter, at the most two letters, a year; but she was an expert in dried and preserved fruits, although she never put her own hand to anything, and, in general, was reluctant to move from one spot. Arína Vlásievna was very good-natured, and, in her own way, not at all stupid. She knew that there are in the world gentlemen whose duty it is to command, and common people whose duty it is to obey,—and therefore she did not disdain either obsequiousness or lowly reverences to the earth; but she treated her inferiors graciously and gently; she never let a beggar pass without a gift, and she never condemned any one, although she did occasionally indulge in gossip. In her youth she had been very pretty, had played on the clavichord, and had spoken a little French; but in the course of wanderings, which extended over many years, with her

[1] The dove being the symbol of the Holy Spirit, the majority of Russians will neither kill nor eat pigeons.—Translator.

husband, whom she had married against her will, she had deteriorated and had forgotten her music and her French. She loved and feared her son unspeakably; she allowed Vasíly Iványitch to manage her estate,—and never required an accounting for anything: she groaned, waved the subject away with her handkerchief and kept raising her eyebrows higher and higher, as soon as Vasíly Iványitch began to explain impending reforms and his plans. She was given to forebodings, was constantly expecting some great catastrophe, and fell to weeping the moment she called to mind anything mournful. . . Such women are now becoming extinct. God knows whether we ought to rejoice at it!

XXI

When he got out of bed Arkády opened the window,—and the first object which met his eyes was Vasíly Iványitch. Clad in a dressing-gown from Bukhará, girt with a handkerchief, the old man was engaged in digging assiduously in his vegetable garden. He caught sight of his young visitor, and leaning on his spade, he exclaimed:—"I wish you health! How have you been pleased to sleep?"

"Splendidly," answered Arkády.

"And here am I, as you see, like some sort of a Cincinnatus, preparing a bed for late radishes. The times are such—and glory to God for it!—that every one is bound to earn his living with his own hands; no hopes are to be placed on others: one must toil for himself. And it turns out that Jean-Jacques Rousseau was right. Half an hour ago, my dear sir, you would have beheld me in a totally different attitude. There was a peasant-woman who complained of *gnétka*,—that 's what they call it, but we call it dysentery,—and I . . . . . how shall I best express it . . I poured opium into her; and I have pulled a tooth for another woman. I proposed to the latter that she should take ether, . . . but she would not consent.

I do all this gratis—*en amateur,* but that is no marvel; for I am a plebeian, *homo novus*—I 'm not a member of the ancient nobility, like my spouse. . . . But will not you come hither into the shade to get a breath of the morning freshness before tea?"

Arkády went out and joined him.

"Welcome, once more!"—said Vasíly Ivánitch, putting his hand, in military fashion, to the greasy skull-cap which covered his head.—"You are accustomed to luxury, I know, to pleasures, but even the great ones of this world do not disdain to spend a short time under the roof of the cottage."

"Good gracious!"—shouted Arkády,—"what do you mean by calling me one of the great ones of this world? And I am not accustomed to luxury."

"Pardon me, pardon me,"—retorted Vasíly Ivánitch with a polite grin.—"Although I am now relegated to the archives, I also have rubbed elbows with society—I know the bird by its flight. I am also a psychologist, in my own way, and a physiognomist. Had I not that gift, I venture to say that I would have perished long ago; such a small man as myself would have stood no chance at all. I will tell you, without compliments: the friendship which I observe between you and my son affords me great joy. I have already seen him; he, according to his habit, of which you are

probably aware, got up very early, and scoured the neighbourhood. Permit me to inquire,—Have you known my Evgény long?"

"Since this last winter."

"Exactly so, sir. And permit me to ask you another question,—but will not you sit down?—Permit me to ask you, as a father, in all frankness: What opinion do you hold of my Evgény?"

"Your son is one of the most remarkable men whom I have ever met,"—remarked Arkády with animation.

Vasíly Iványitch's eyes suddenly dilated, and a faint flush overspread his cheeks. The spade fell from his hands.

"So you assume . ." he began . . . . .

"I am convinced,"—interposed Arkády,—"that a great future awaits your son, that he will glorify your name. I have been convinced of that since the very first time I met him."

"How . . . how was that?"—Vasíly Iványitch barely articulated. A rapturous smile parted his broad lips and did not again depart from them.

"You want to know how we met?"

"Yes . . and in general . . . ."

Arkády began to narrate and talk about Bazároff with even more fervour, with even more enthusiasm, than on the evening when he had danced the mazurka with Madame Odíntzoff.

Vasíly Iványitch listened to him—listened, blew his nose, dandled his handkerchief in both hands,

coughed, ruffled up his hair—and, at last, could contain himself no longer: he bent toward Arkády and kissed him on the shoulder.[1]—"You have made me perfectly happy,"—he said, without ceasing to smile.—"I am bound to tell you that I . . . adore my son; I need say nothing as to my old woman: she 's his mother—everybody knows what that means!—but I dare not express my feelings in his presence, because he does not like that. He is averse to all effusions; many persons even condemn him for that firmness of character, and discern in it a sign of pride, or absence of feeling; but people like him must not be measured with the ordinary yard-stick, is n't that so? Take this, for example: any other man in his place would have drawn and drawn on his parents; but he, will you believe it? has never taken an extra kopék from us in his life, as God is my witness!"

"He is an unselfish, honourable man,"—remarked Arkády.

"Precisely so, unselfish. And I not only adore him, Arkády Nikoláitch, I am proud of him, and my whole pride consists in this, that in course of time these words will stand in his biography: 'he was the son of a simple staff-doctor, who, nevertheless, understood how to divine him early in life, and spared no expense on his education. . .'" The old man's voice broke.

[1] As serfs were wont to do to their masters.—TRANSLATOR.

Arkády squeezed his hand.

"What think you,"—asked Vasíly Iványitch, after a brief silence,—"assuredly he will not attain in the medical career that fame which you prophesy for him?"

"Of course not in the medical career, although in that respect also he will be one of the leading lights."

"In what career then, Arkády Nikoláitch?"

"That is difficult to say at present, but he will become famous."

"He will become famous!"—repeated the old man, and became immersed in meditation.

"Arína Vlásievna has ordered me to ask you to drink tea,"—said Anfísushka as she passed them with a huge dish of ripe raspberries.

Vasíly Iványitch started—"And will there be chilled cream for the raspberries?"

"There will, sir."

"See to it that it is cold! Do not stand on ceremony, Arkády Nikoláitch,—take a lot. I wonder why Evgény does not come."

"Here I am,"—rang out Bazároff's voice from Arkády's room.

Vasíly Iványitch wheeled hastily round. "Aha! thou hast wished to visit thy friend, but thou wert belated, *amice*, and he and I have already had a long conversation. Now we must go and drink tea: thy mother summons us. By the way, I must have a talk with thee."

"What about?"

"There is a wretched peasant here; he is suffering from *icterus*. . . ."

"In other words, from jaundice?"

"Yes, from chronic and very obstinate *icterus*. I have prescribed for him centaury, and Saint John's wort, I have made him eat carrots, I have administered soda; but all these are palliatives; something more decisive is necessary. Although thou jeerest at medicine, yet I am persuaded that thou canst give me practical advice. But we will talk of that later. And now let us go and drink tea."

Vasíly Iványitch sprang up briskly from the bench and began to sing from *Robert le Diable*:

"We 'll make a law, a law, a law unto ourselves
In joy . . . in joy . . . in joyfulness to dwell!"

"What remarkable vitality!"—said Bazároff and he withdrew from the window.

Midday arrived. The sun blazed from behind a thin veil of continuous, whitish clouds. Silence reigned: only the cocks crowed provokingly at each other in the village, arousing in every one who heard them a strange sensation of drowsiness and weariness; and somewhere aloft in the crests of the trees resounded like a wailing call the unintermitting squeak of a young hawk. Arkády and Bazároff were lying in the shade of a small hay-stack, having placed beneath themselves a

couple of armfuls of the rustlingly-dry, but still green and fragrant grass.

"Yonder aspen-tree,"—began Bazároff, "reminds me of my childhood; it grows on the brink of a pit, the relic of a brick-shed, and at that time I was convinced that that pit and the aspen possessed a peculiar talisman: I never felt bored when I was by their side. I did not understand then that I was not bored, because I was a child. Well, now I am grown up, and the talisman does not work."

"How much time hast thou spent here altogether?"—asked Arkády.

"Two years in succession; then we used to come here occasionally. We led a wandering life; we used to haunt the towns chiefly."

"And has this house been standing long?"

"Yes. My grandfather built it, my mother's father."

"Who was he—thy grandfather?"

"The deuce knows. Some Second-Major or other. He served under Suvóroff, and was forever telling about crossing the Alps. He lied, I suppose."

"That 's why there is a portrait of Suvóroff hanging in your drawing-room. I like such little houses as yours, old and warm; and there is a certain peculiar odour in them."

"It smacks of olive oil from the shrine-lamp, and sweet clover,"—articulated Bazároff with a

yawn.—"But what a lot of flies there are in these charming little houses . . . . . phew!"

"Tell me,"—began Arkády, after a brief silence,—"wert thou oppressed in thy childhood?"

"Thou seest what my parents are like.—They 're not strict folks."

"Dost thou love them, Evgény?"

"Yes, Arkády!"

"They love thee so!"

Bazároff said nothing for a while.—"Dost thou know what I am thinking about?"—he said at last, throwing his hands behind his head.

"No. What is it?"

"I am thinking: my parents have a jolly good time in the world! My father, at the age of sixty, fusses about, talks about 'palliative' remedies, doctors people, is generous to his peasants,—in a word, he leads a life of dissipation; and my mother finds life pleasant also: her day is so crammed with all sorts of occupations, with akhs! and okhs! that she has no time to bethink herself; while I . . . . ."

"While thou?"

"While I think: here I lie now under a haystack . . . . the space I occupy is small, so tiny in comparison with the surrounding expanse, where I am not, and where no one cares about me; and the portion of time which I shall manage to live through is so insignificant, in comparison with

eternity, where I have not been and shall not be. . . . But in this atom, this mathematical point, the blood is circulating, the brain is working, it wants something also. . . . What a monstrosity! What nonsense!"

"Permit me to remark that what thou art saying is applicable to all men in general. . . ."

"Thou art right,"—chimed in Bazároff.—"What I wanted to say is that they, that is, my parents, are occupied, and do not bother about their own insignificance; it does not stink in their nostrils . . . while I . . . feel simply bored and wrathful."

"Wrathful? Why wrathful?"

"Why? What dost thou mean by 'why'? Can it be that thou hast forgotten?"

"I remember everything, but nevertheless I do not acknowledge that thou hast a right to be angry. Thou art unhappy, I admit, but . . . ."

"Eh! I perceive that thou, Arkády Nikoláevitch, understandest love like all the most modern young men: *cheep, cheep, cheep,* chicken, but just as soon as the chicken begins to approach, make off as fast as you can!—I am not like that. But enough on that score. It is shameful to talk about what cannot be helped." He turned over on his side.—"Aha! yonder is a bold ant dragging a half-dead fly. Drag it along, brother, drag it along! Don't mind its resistance, take advantage of the fact that thou, in thy quality of an animal,

hast a right not to recognise the feeling of suffering, which is quite the reverse of the case with one of us, who is ' self-broken ' ! "

" That is not the thing for thee to say, Evgény! —When hast thou broken thyself? "

Bazároff raised his head.—" That 's the only thing I am proud of. I have not broken myself, and a woman shall not break me. Amen! Done with! Thou wilt never hear another word about it from me."

The two friends lay for some time in silence.

" Yes,"—began Bazároff,—" man is a strange being. When one gazes thus from one side, and from a distance, at life in the wilds, such as our ' fathers ' lead, it seems to him: What could be better? Eat, drink, and know that thou art acting in the most regular, most sensible manner. But no; melancholy seizes hold upon one. One wants to consort with people, even if it be to revile them, but to consort with them."

" One must arrange life in such a way that every moment in it will be significant,"—said Arkády thoughtfully.

" Who says so! The significant, although it is sometimes false, is sweet, but it is also possible to reconcile one's self to the insignificant . . . . but there 's the empty tittle-tattle, the empty tittle-tattle—that 's the trouble."

" Tittle-tattle does not exist for a man, if only he refuse to recognise it."

"H'm ... thou hast uttered the *opposite commonplace.*"

"What?—What dost thou call by that name?"

"Why, this: to say, for example, that civilisation is useful,—that is a commonplace; but to say that civilisation is harmful is the opposite commonplace. It appears to be more elegant, but, in reality, it is identical."

"But where is the truth, on which side?"

"Where? I will answer thee like Echo: 'Where?'"

"Thou art in a melancholy mood to-day, Evgény."

"Really? The sun must have stewed me, and one should not eat so many raspberries."

"In that case, it would not be a bad idea to have a nap,"—remarked Arkády.

"All right; only don't look at me: every man has a stupid face when he is asleep."

"But is n't it a matter of indifference to thee what people think of thee?"

"I don't know what to say to thee. A genuine man ought not to worry about that; a genuine man is the one for whom it is not worth while to think, but whom one must obey or hate."

"It is strange! I do not hate any one,"—said Arkády, after reflection.

"And I hate so many. Thou art a tender soul, a sluggish man, why shouldst thou hate!—Thou

art timid, thou hast little confidence in thyself. . . ."

"And thou,"—interrupted Arkády,—"hast thou confidence in thyself? Hast thou a lofty opinion of thyself?"

Bazároff remained silent for a while.—"When I meet a man who will not sing small before me,"—he said with breaks and pauses,—"then I will alter my opinion of myself.—Hate! Why, here, for example, thou didst say to-day, as we passed the cottage of our overseer, Philíp,—it is so fine and white,—here thou didst say,—that Russia would attain to perfection when the last peasant should have such a dwelling, and every one of us ought to promote it. . . . But I hated that last peasant, Philíp or Sídor, for whom I am to toil and moil, and who will not even say 'thanks' to me . . . . and what do I want with his thanks, anyway? Well, he will live in a white cottage, but burdocks will be growing out of me.—Well, and what comes next?"

"Enough, Evgény . . . when one listens to thee to-day, one involuntarily agrees with those who accuse us of a lack of principles."

"Thou art talking like thy uncle. In general, there are no principles—hast thou not discovered that yet! but there are sensations. Everything depends on them."

"How so?"

"Why, because.—Take me; for example: I

hold to the negative tendency,—by virtue of sensation. It is agreeable to me to deny my brain is constructed in that way—and that 's enough! Why do I like chemistry? Why dost thou like apples?—also by virtue of the sensation. All that is identical. Deeper than that, men will never penetrate. Not every one will tell thee that, and I shall not tell thee that again."

"What? and is honour also a sensation?"

"I should say so!"

"Evgény!"—began Arkády in a sad voice.

"Ah? What? Is n't it to thy taste?"—interrupted Bazároff.—"No, brother! If thou hast made up thy mind to mow down everything—lay thyself by the heels also! . . . . But we have philosophised enough. 'Nature incites to the silence of slumber,' says Púshkin."

"He never said anything of the sort,"—said Arkády.

"Well, if he did n't say it, he might and should have said it in his quality of a poet. By the way, he must have been in the military service."

"Púshkin never was a military man."

"Upon my word, he shows it on every page:—'To battle, to battle! For the honour of Russia!'"

"What fables thou dost invent! Why, that is downright calumny."

"Calumny? Much I care about that! He has undertaken to scare me with a word! Whatever

calumny you impute to a man he really deserves something twenty times worse."

"We 'd better go to sleep,"—said Arkády with vexation.

"With the greatest pleasure,"—replied Bazároff. But neither of them got to sleep. A certain almost hostile feeling had seized possession of the hearts of both young men. Five minutes later they opened their eyes and exchanged a glance in silence.

"Look,"—said Arkády at last,—"a dry maple-leaf has broken loose and falls to the ground; its movement is exactly like that of a butterfly. Is n't it strange? The most melancholy and dead resembles the most merry and lively."

"Oh, my friend, Arkády Nikoláitch!"—cried Bazároff,—"I make one request of thee: don't use fine language."

"I talk as I can. . . And this is despotism, in short. An idea has come into my head: why not utter it?"

"Precisely; but why should not I utter my thought also? I think that to use fine language is improper."

"What is proper then? To swear?"

"Eh, eh! But I perceive that thou really art bent upon following in the footsteps of thy uncle. How that idiot would rejoice if he could hear thee!"

"What was that thou didst call Pável Petróvitch?"

"I called him what he deserves—an idiot."

"But this is unbearable!" exclaimed Arkády.

"Aha! the sentiment of consanguinuity has spoken,"—remarked Bazároff tranquilly.—"I have noticed that it stands its ground very persistently in people. A man is ready to reject everything, he will part with every prejudice; but to admit that his brother, who steals other people's handkerchiefs is a thief—is beyond his strength. Yes, and in fact: *my* brother, *mine* is not a genius . . . is that possible?"

"What spoke in me was the simple sentiment of justice, and not that of consanguinuity at all," —retorted Arkády vehemently.—"But since thou hast not that *sensation,* thou canst not judge of it."

"In other words, Arkády Kirsánoff is too lofty for my comprehension; I bow my head and hold my tongue."

"Please stop, Evgény; we shall end by quarrelling."

"Akh, Arkády! do me that favour: let us have a good quarrel for once—to the point of peeling off our coats to extermination."

"Well, if we go on like this, probably we shall wind up by . . . ."

"By fighting?" — interpolated Bazároff.— "What of that? Here on the hay, in such idyllic

surroundings, far from the world and the gaze of men—it does n't matter. But thou wilt not get the better of me. I shall instantly clutch thee by the throat. . . . ."

Bazároff spread wide his long, tough fingers. . . Arkády turned over and made ready, as though in jest, to offer resistance. . . . But his friend's face struck him as so malevolent, there seemed to him to be something so far from a jest in the wry smile on his lips, in his blazing eyes,—that he felt an involuntary timidity. . . .

" Ah! so this is where you 've got to! "—rang out Vasíly Iványitch's voice at that moment, and the old regimental staff-surgeon stood before the young men, clad in a home-made linen pea-jacket and with a straw hat, also of domestic manufacture, on his head.—" I have been hunting and hunting for you. . . But you have chosen a capital place and are devoting yourselves to a very fine occupation. Lying on the ' earth ' to gaze at ' heaven.' . . Do you know, there is a certain special significance in that! "

" I gaze at heaven only when I want to sneeze," —growled Bazároff, and, turning to Arkády, he added, in an undertone: " It 's a pity he has disturbed us."

" Come, enough of that,"—whispered Arkády, and stealthily pressed his friend's hand. But no friendship can long withstand such clashes.

" I look at you, my young companions,"—

Vasíly Iványitch was saying in the meantime, as he shook his head and rested his clasped hands on an artfully twisted cane of his own manufacture, with the figure of a Turk in place of a knob,—"I look and cannot sufficiently admire you. How much strength and the most vigorous youth, capacities, talents, you have! 'T is simply . . . . Castor and Pollux!"

"See now—he makes pretensions to knowing mythology!"—remarked Bazároff. "'T is immediately evident that he was strong on Latin in his day! I think I remember that thou wert given the silver medal for composition—hey?"

"The Dioscuri, the Dioscuri!"—repeated Vasíly Iványitch.

"Come, father, have done with that,—don't get sentimental."

"It is permissible once in a way,"—stammered the old man.—"But I have not hunted you up, gentlemen, for the purpose of paying you compliments, but with the object, in the first place, of informing you that we are to dine soon; and, in the second place,—I wanted to warn thee, Evgény. . . . Thou art a sensible man, thou knowest men and thou knowest women, and, consequently, thou wilt pardon me. . . . Thy mother wished to have a prayer-service celebrated in honour of thy arrival. Don't imagine that I am summoning thee to be present at that prayer-service: it is already finished; but Father Alexyéi . . . ."

"The pope?"

"Well, yes, the priest; he is going to dine with us. . . . I had not expected it, and even advised against it . . . but somehow it turned out that way . . . . he did not understand me. . . . . Moreover, he is a very good and sagacious man."

"He won't eat my portion at dinner, will he?" —asked Bazároff.

Vasíly Iványitch laughed—"Good gracious, what dost thou mean?"

"I demand nothing more. I am ready to sit down at table with any sort of man."

Vasíly Iványitch adjusted his hat.—"I was convinced in advance,"—he said,—"that thou art above all prejudices. As for that, I am an old man: I have lived for sixty years, and I have none." (Vasíly Iványitch did not dare to confess that he himself had desired to have the prayer-service. . . . He was no less devout than his wife.) "And Father Alexyéi was very anxious to make thy acquaintance. Thou wilt like him, as thou wilt see. He is not averse to a game of cards either, and even . . . . but that is between ourselves . . . he smokes a pipe."

"You don't say so? After dinner we 'll sit down to whist and I 'll beat him."

"Ha—ha—ha, we shall see! That 's the question."

"What 's that? Art thou going to recall the

pleasures of youth?"—said Bazároff, with peculiar emphasis.

Vasíly Iványitch's bronzed cheeks crimsoned with confusion.

"Art not thou ashamed of thyself, Evgény?—What 's past is past. Well, and I am ready to confess in *his* presence that I had that passion in my youth—as a matter of fact; and I have paid well for it, too!—But how hot it is. Allow me to sit down beside you. I 'm not in the way, am I?"

"Not in the least,"—replied Arkády.

Vasíly Iványitch dropped down on the hay with a grunt.—"Your present couch, gentlemen,"—he began,—"reminds me of my military, bivouac life, field hospitals, also somewhere close to a haystack, thank God for that."—He sighed.—"I have gone through a great deal—a great deal, in my time. Now, for instance, if you will permit me, I will tell you a curious episode of the plague in Bessarabia."

"For which you received the Order of St. Vladímir?"—interpolated Bazároff. "We know about it—we know about it. . . . By the way, why dost not thou wear it?"

"Why, I have told thee that I have no prejudices,"—stammered Vasíly Iványitch (only the day before he had commanded that the red ribbon should be ripped off his coat), and he began to narrate the episode of the plague.—"Why, he has fallen asleep,"—he suddenly

whispered to Arkády, pointing at Bazároff, and he winked good-humouredly.—"Evgény! get up!"—he added aloud.—"Come to dinner. . . ."

Father Alexyéi, a stout and stately man, with thick, carefully brushed hair, and an embroidered belt over his lilac cassock, proved to be a very adroit and ready-witted person. He hastened to shake hands with Arkády and Bazároff, as though he understood beforehand that they did not need his blessing,[1] and altogether he bore himself without constraint. He neither lowered his own dignity, nor gave offence to others; he laughed opportunely at seminary Latin and stood up for his Bishop; he drank two glasses of wine, but refused a third; he accepted a cigar from Arkády, but did not smoke it, saying that he would carry it home. The only thing about him that was not thoroughly agreeable was that he kept slowly and cautiously lifting his hand to catch flies on his face, and in so doing he sometimes crushed them. He seated himself at the card-table with a moderate show of satisfaction, and ended by winning two rubles and a half from Bazároff in bills; in Arína Vlásievna's house no one had the least conception of reckoning in silver money. . .[2] As before, she sat beside her son (she did not play

[1] It is customary for priests and the higher ecclesiastics to bestow their blessing upon laymen, and have their hand kissed in return, instead of shaking hands.—TRANSLATOR.

[2] At the epoch referred to, silver was considerably more valuable than bills.—TRANSLATOR

cards), as before she propped her cheek on her fist, and only rose for the purpose of giving orders to serve some fresh viand. She was afraid to caress Bazároff, and he did not encourage her, did not challenge her to caresses, and, in addition, Vasíly Iványitch had advised her not to "bother" him too much.—"Young men don't like it,"—he had inculcated upon her; (it is unnecessary to say what the dinner was like that day: Timoféitch had galloped off in person at early dawn for some special Tcherkessian beef; the overseer had gone in another direction for burbot, perch and crawfish; for mushrooms alone the peasant women had been paid forty-two kopéks in copper money); but Arína Vlásievna's eyes, immovably fastened upon Bazároff, expressed not alone devotion and tenderness: in them there was visible also sadness mingled with curiosity and terror: there was visible a sort of submissive reproach.

But Bazároff was in no mood to decipher precisely what his mother's eyes expressed; he rarely addressed her, and then only with a curt question. Once he asked her for her hand "for luck"; she gently laid her soft little hand on his hard, broad palm.

"Well,"—she inquired, after waiting a while,—"did n't it help?"

"Things went still worse,"—he replied with a careless smile.

"They are taking great risks,"—articulated

Father Alexyéi, as though with compassion, and stroked his handsome beard.

"Napoleon's rule, my good father, Napoleon's rule,"—interpolated Vasíly Ivánitch,—and led an ace.

"And it led him to the island of St. Helena,"—remarked Father Alexyéi, and trumped with the ace.

"Wouldst not thou like some raspberry water, Eniúshenka?"—asked Arína Vlásievna.

Bazároff merely shrugged his shoulders.

"No!"—he said to Arkády on the following day,—"I 'm going away to-morrow. It 's tiresome; I want to work and it 's impossible here. I 'll go back to the country with thee; I have left all my preparations there. In thy house at least one can lock himself up. But here my father keeps repeating to me: 'my study is at thy service—no one will disturb thee,'—and he himself never goes a step from me. And somehow, too, I 'm ashamed to lock him out. And it 's the same with my mother. I hear her sighing on the other side of the wall, but if I go to her I have nothing to say."

"She is greatly afflicted,"—said Arkády,—"and so is he."

"I 'll return to them."

"When?"

"Why, on my way to Petersburg."

"I am particularly sorry for thy mother."

"Why so? Has she been treating thee to berries?"

Arkády dropped his eyes.—"Thou dost not know thy mother, Evgény. She is not only an excellent woman, she is very clever, really. This morning she talked to me for half an hour—so practically, so interesting."

"She probably dilated upon me the whole time?"

"The conversation was not about thee alone."

"Possibly; things are more visible to thee as an outsider. If a woman can maintain a half-hour's conversation, that is a good sign. But I 'm going away, nevertheless."

"Thou wilt not find it easy to impart that information to them. They are both discussing what we are to do a fortnight hence."

"It is not easy. The devil prompted me today to annoy my father: the other day he gave orders that one of his serfs who pays him quit-rent should be flogged—and he did quite right; yes, yes, don't stare at me in such horror,—he did quite right, because the man is the most frightful thief and drunkard; only my father did not in the least expect that I should get wind of the affair, as the expression is. He was very much disconcerted, and now I must grieve him to boot. . . Never mind! It won't kill him!"

Bazároff said, "Never mind!" but a whole day elapsed before he could bring himself to inform

Vasíly Iványitch of his intention. At last, as he was bidding him good-night in the study, he said, with a forced yawn:

"Yes. . . I came near forgetting to tell thee. . . Please order our horses to be sent on to Feodót to-morrow for the relay."

Vasíly Iványitch was astounded.—"Is Mr. Kirsánoff going away from us?"

"Yes; and I am going with him."

Vasíly Iványitch whirled round where he stood. —"Thou art going away?"

"Yes . . . I must. Please make arrangements about the horses."

"Very well . . ." stammered the old man:— "for the relay . . very good . . . . only . . . . only . . . . What does it mean?"

"I must go to his house for a short time. Then I will come back here."

"Yes! For a short time. . . Very good."— Vasíly Iványitch pulled out his handkerchief, and as he blew his nose he bent over almost to the floor. . "Very well . . . all shall be done. I was thinking that thou wouldst stay with us . . . . longer. Three days. . . . That . . that . . is very little after three years; it is very little, Evgény!"

"But I tell thee I am coming back soon. It is indispensable that I should go."

"Indispensable. . . . What then? One must do one's duty first of all. . . . So I am to des-

patch the horses? Very good. Of course Arína and I did not expect this. She has begged some flowers from a neighbour; she meant to embellish thy room." (Vasíly Iványitch made no mention of the fact that very morning, as soon as it was light, standing barefooted in his slippers, he had taken counsel with Timoféitch, and drawing forth, with trembling fingers, one bank-note after another, had commissioned him to make divers purchases, having special reference to victuals and to claret, which, so far as he had been able to observe, the young men greatly liked.) "The main thing is freedom;—that is my rule . . . one must not impede . . . not . . ."

He suddenly relapsed into silence and went toward the door.

"We shall see each other again soon, father, really."

But Vasíly Iványitch, without turning round, merely waved his hand and left the room. On reaching his bedroom he found his wife in bed, and began to pray in a whisper, in order not to waken her. But she awoke, nevertheless.—"Is it thou, Vasíly Iványitch?"—she asked.

"Yes, dear little mother."

"Comest thou from Eniúsha? Dost thou know I am afraid: he does not sleep comfortably on the couch. I ordered Anfísushka to give him thy camp mattress and new pillows; I would have

given him our feather-bed, but I remember that he does not like a soft bed."

"Never mind, dear little mother, don't worry. He 's all right. O Lord, have mercy upon us sinners,"—he continued his prayer in a low voice. Vasíly Iványitch was sorry for his old woman; he did not like to tell her overnight what a sorrow was in store for her.

Bazároff and Arkády went away on the following day. From early morning everything in the house grew melancholy; the dishes tumbled out of Anfísushka's hands; even Fédka was surprised, and ended by pulling off his boots. Vasíly Iványitch bustled about more than ever: he was evidently keeping up his courage; he talked in a loud voice and clumped with his feet, but his face was haggard and his glances constantly slipped past his son. Arína Vlásievna wept quietly; she was thoroughly distraught, and would not have been able to control herself if her husband had not argued with her for two whole hours early in the morning. But when Bazároff, after repeated promises to return not later than a month hence, tore himself at last from the restraining embraces, and took his seat in the tarantás; when the horses started and the bell began to jingle and the wheels began to revolve,—and there was no longer any use in staring after him, and the dust had subsided, and Timoféitch, all bowed and reeling as he walked, dragged himself back to his kennel;

when the old folks were left alone in their house, which also seemed suddenly to have shrunk together and grown decrepit: Vasíly Iványitch, who only a few moments before had been bravely waving his handkerchief from the porch, dropped into a chair and drooped his head upon his breast. "He has abandoned, abandoned us,"—he stammered,—"abandoned us; he found it tiresome with us. Alone, solitary as a finger now, alone!" he repeated several times, and every time he thrust out his hand in front of him with the forefinger standing apart. Then Arína Vlásievna went up to him, and leaning her grey head against his grey head, she said: "What is to be done, Vásya? A son is a slice cut off. He is like the falcon: when he would he flew hither, when he would he flew away; thou and I are like mushrooms on a hollow tree: we sit in a row and never stir from our places. Only I shall remain forever inalterable to thee, as thou wilt to me."

Vasíly Iványitch removed his hands from his face and embraced his wife, his friend, as closely as he had embraced her in their youth: she had comforted him in his grief.

XXII

In silence, only now and then exchanging insignificant words, our friends arrived at Feodót's. Bazároff was not wholly satisfied with himself. Arkády was displeased with him. Moreover, he felt in his heart that causeless melancholy which is known to very young people alone. The coachman transferred the harness to the fresh horses, and clambering to the box, inquired: "To the right, or to the left?"

Arkády shivered. The road to the right led to the town and thence home; the road to the left led to Madame Odíntzoff's.

He glanced at Bazároff.

"Evgény,"—he asked,—"to the left?"

Bazároff turned away.—"What folly is this?"—he muttered.

"I know that it is folly,"—replied Arkády. . . . "But where 's the harm in that? Would it be the first time we have perpetrated it?"

Bazároff pulled his cap down on his brow.—"As thou wilt,"—he said at last.

"Turn to the left,"—shouted Arkády.

The tarantás rolled on in the direction of Nikólskoe. But once having decided on the

folly, the friends maintained a more obstinate silence than ever, and even appeared to be angry.

From the very way in which the butler received them on the porch of Madame Odíntzoff's house the friends were enabled to divine that they had not acted wisely in yielding to the whim which had suddenly seized them. Evidently they were not expected. They sat waiting for a fairly long time, and with decidedly foolish faces, in the drawing-room. Madame Odíntzoff came at last. She greeted them with the graciousness which was peculiar to her, but was surprised at their speedy return, and, so far as could be judged from the deliberation of her movements and her speech, she was not over delighted by it. They hastened to explain that they had only dropped in on their way, and four hours later they went on to the town. She confined herself to a slight exclamation, requested Arkády to present her compliments to his father, and sent for her aunt. The Princess made her appearance in a very sleepy state, which imparted still greater malice to the expression of her wrinkled old face. Kátya was indisposed; she did not leave her room. Arkády suddenly became conscious of the fact that he was, at least, as desirous of seeing Kátya as Anna Sergyéevna herself. The four hours passed in insignificant chat about this and that; Anna Sergyéevna both listened and talked without a smile. Only just as they were

taking leave did her former friendliness seem to stir in her soul.

"I have a fit of spleen just at present,"—she said,—"but you must pay no heed to that, and come again—I am saying this to both of you,—after a while."

Both Bazároff and Arkády answered her by a silent bow, seated themselves in their carriage, and without halting again anywhere, drove off home to Márino, where they arrived in safety on the following day at evening. During the whole course of the journey neither of them so much as mentioned Madame Odíntzoff's name; Bazároff, in particular, hardly opened his mouth, and kept staring to one side away from the road with a certain obdurate intensity.

Every one at Márino was extremely glad to see them. The prolonged absence of his son had begun to trouble Nikolái Petróvitch. He cried out, flung his legs about and bounced about on the divan when Fénitchka ran into his room with beaming eyes and announced the arrival of "the young gentlemen"; even Pável Petróvitch felt a certain agreeable agitation, and smiled condescendingly as he shook hands with the returned wanderers. They began to talk and ask questions; Arkády did most of the talking, especially at supper, which lasted until long after midnight. Nikolái Petróvitch ordered several bottles of porter to be served, which had just been brought from

Moscow, and he himself indulged in dissipation to such an extent that his cheeks became deep crimson, and he laughed incessantly in a way which was not precisely childish nor yet precisely nervous. The general exhilaration extended to the servants also. Dunyásha ran back and forth like one possessed, and kept slamming the doors, and Piótr, even at two o'clock in the morning, was still trying to play a kazák waltz on the guitar. The strings resounded wailingly and pleasingly in the motionless air; but, with the exception of a little preliminary fioritura, the educated valet could get nothing out of his instrument: nature had denied him musical talent, as well as all other faculties.

Meanwhile, life did not arrange itself very comfortably at Márino, and poor Nikolái Petróvitch fared badly. His anxieties about the farm augmented with every passing day—cheerless, inexorable anxieties. His difficulties with his hired labourers became unendurable. Some demanded their pay or an increase, others went away after they had received their earnest-money; the horses fell ill; the harness wore out as though burned with fire; the work was heedlessly done; the threshing machine which had been ordered from Moscow turned out to be unsuitable, owing to its weight; another was ruined the first time it was used; half of the cattle-sheds burned down because a blind old woman, one of the house-serfs,

went in windy weather to fumigate her cow with a firebrand. . . . The catastrophe occurred, it is true, according to the assertion of that same old woman, because the master had taken it into his head to set up some unheard-of cheeses and dairy-products. The overseer suddenly grew lazy, and even began to grow fat, as every Russian man does grow fat when " free bread " falls to his lot. On catching sight from afar of Nikolái Petróvitch, in order to display his zeal, he would fling a chip at a sucking-pig which was running by, or menace a half-nude little boy; but the rest of the time he spent chiefly in sleeping. The peasants who had been placed on the quit-rent basis did not bring their money at the appointed time and stole wood in the forest; almost every night the watchmen found, and sometimes captured after a scrimmage, the peasants' horses in the meadows of the " farm." Nikolái Petróvitch tried the plan of inflicting a fine in money for the damage done by this grazing, but the affair usually ended by the horses being restored to their owners after they had been fed at his expense for a day or two. To crown all, the peasants began to quarrel among themselves; brothers demanded a division, their wives could not get along together in one house; all at once a brawl began to rage, and suddenly everything was in an uproar, as though at the word of command every one was rushing past the porch of the estate-office besieg-

ing the master, often with bruised faces, in an intoxicated condition, and demanding justice and chastisement; clamour arose, and roars, and the whimpering shrieks of women mingled with curses from the men. It became necessary to examine into the conflicting claims, to shout one's self hoarse, knowing in advance that it was impossible, nevertheless, to arrive at any correct decision. There were not hands enough for the reaping: a neighbouring peasant-proprietor, with the most ingratiating countenance, had contracted to furnish reapers at two rubles a desyatína, and had cheated in the most unconscionable manner; his peasant women demanded unheard-of prices, and, in the meantime, the grain was falling from the ear upon the ground, and while on the one hand the reaping could not be managed, on the other hand, the Council of Guardians was menacing and demanding immediate and full payment of interest on its loan. . . . . .

"It is beyond my strength!"—Nikoláï Petróvitch more than once exclaimed with despair.—"It is out of the question for me to fight myself, and my principles do not permit me to send for the chief of the rural police, and yet, without the fear of punishment, nothing can be accomplished!"

"*Du calme, du calme,*"—Pável Petróvitch replied to this, but he himself purred and frowned and tugged at his moustache.

Bazároff held himself aloof from all these "squabbles," and, moreover, as a guest it was not his place to meddle with other people's affairs. On the day after his arrival at Márino, he betook himself to his frogs, his infusoriæ, his chemical compounds, and busied himself exclusively with them. Arkády, on the contrary, regarded it as his duty, if not to aid his father, at least to display a mien of being ready to aid him. He listened patiently to him, and one day he offered some piece of advice, not with the object of having it followed, but for the sake of showing his sympathy. Farming matters did not arouse repugnance in him: he had even meditated with pleasure on agricultural activity; but at that period other thoughts were swarming in his brain. Arkády, to his own amazement, thought incessantly of Nikólskoe; formerly he would only have shrugged his shoulders if any one had told him that he could feel bored under the same roof with Bazároff, and under what roof to boot!—that of his father; but he really was bored and longed to get away. He took it into his head to walk until he was tired out, but this was of no avail. While chatting one day with his father he learned that Nikolái Petróvitch had several decidedly interesting letters written in former days by Madame Odíntzoff's mother to his dead wife, and he did not leave him in peace until he had got possession of these letters, in search of which

Nikoláï Petróvitch was obliged to rummage in a score of different drawers and chests. On entering into possession of these half-decayed papers, Arkády seemed to calm down, just as though he perceived ahead of him the goal toward which it behooved him to advance. "I will tell you both about it," he kept constantly whispering,—adding to himself: "I will go, I will go, devil take it!" But he recalled his last visit, the cool reception and the former awkwardness, and was overcome with timidity. The "Perchance" of youth, a secret desire to taste his happiness, to test his powers all by himself, without the protection of any one whomsoever—finally won the victory. Ten days had not elapsed after his return to Márino before he again galloped off to the town, under the pretext of studying the mechanism of the Sunday-schools,[1] and thence to Nikólskoe. Incessantly urging the postilion to greater speed, he dashed thither like a young officer to a battle: he felt afraid and gay and suffocating with impatience. "The chief thing is not to think," he kept repeating to himself. He had chanced upon a wild postilion; the man drew up in front of every dram-shop, saying: "Have a drink?" or "Don't we want a drink?" but, on the other hand, when once he had got his drink he did not spare

[1] For the instruction in reading, writing, and the common branches, of those engaged in labor during the week: not schools for teaching religion exclusively, as that subject occupies a prominent place in all schools in Russia.—TRANSLATOR.

the horses. . . . "What am I doing?"—suddenly flashed through Arkády's head. "Well, I can't turn back, anyway!" The tróïka rolled briskly on; the postilion shouted and whistled. And now the little bridge rumbled under the hoofs and wheels—now the avenue of clipped firs made its appearance. . . . A woman's pink gown flashed amid the dark verdure, a young face peeped out from beneath the light fringe of a parasol. . . . . He recognised Kátya and she recognised him. Arkády ordered the postilion to stop the galloping horses, sprang out of the equipage, and went up to her. "So it is you!"—she said, and a rosy flush gradually overspread all her face:—"Let us go to my sister; she is yonder in the garden; she will be glad to see you."

Kátya led Arkády to the garden. His meeting with her seemed to him a peculiarly happy omen; she had been as delighted to see him as though he were a member of the family. Everything had turned out so capitally: neither butler nor announcement. At the turn of the path he caught sight of Anna Sergyéevna. She was standing with her back to him. On hearing footsteps she gently turned round.

Arkády was on the point of feeling disconcerted, but the first words she uttered immediately restored his composure. "Good-morning, fugitive!" she said in her even, gracious voice, and advanced to meet him, smiling and blinking

with the sun and the wind: "Where didst thou find him, Kátya?"

"I have brought you something,"—he began, —"Anna Sergyéevna, which you were not in the least expecting. . . . "

"You have brought yourself; that is the best of all."

XXIII

After seeing Arkády off with mocking sympathy, and giving him to understand that he was not in the slightest degree deceived as to the real object of his journey, Bazároff definitively isolated himself: the fever of work had descended upon him. He no longer argued with Pável Petróvitch, the more so, as the latter in his presence assumed an extremely aristocratic mien and expressed his opinions more by sounds than by words. Only once did Pável Petróvitch enter into a controversy with the *nihilist* on the question which was then in fashion as to the rights of the nobility of the Baltic Provinces, but he suddenly checked himself, saying with cold courtesy: "However, we cannot understand each other; I, at least, have not the honour to understand you."

"I should think not!"—exclaimed Bazároff. —"A man is capable of understanding everything—the pulsation of the ether and what is going on in the sun; but how another man can blow his nose in any other way than he blows his own,—that he is not capable of understanding."

"Is that witty?"—said Pável Petróvitch inquiringly, and withdrew to one side. However,

he sometimes asked permission to be present at Bazároff's experiments, and once even he put his face, perfumed and washed with an excellent preparation, down to the microscope, in order to watch a transparent infusoria swallow a green particle and chew it up carefully with certain very agile little fists which it had in its throat. Nikolái Petróvitch visited Bazároff much more frequently than did his brother; he would gladly have come every day " to study," as he expressed it, had not the cares of his estate called him elsewhere. He did not disturb the young naturalist; he seated himself somewhere in a corner and watched attentively, rarely permitting himself a cautious question. During dinner and supper he endeavoured to turn the conversation on physics, geology or chemistry, as all other subjects, even those connected with farming, not to mention those connected with politics, might lead if not to collisions, at least to mutual dissatisfaction. Nikolái Petróvitch divined that his brother's hatred for Bazároff was not in the least diminished. One insignificant incident, among many others, confirmed him in his surmise. The cholera had begun to make its appearance here and there in the neighbourhood, and had even " culled " a couple of persons from Márino itself. One night Pável Petróvitch had a rather severe attack. He suffered agonies until morning, but did not have recourse to Bazároff's art—and when he saw him on the

following day, to his query: "Why had not he sent for him?"—he replied, still ghastly pale, but with his hair already well brushed and face carefully shaved:—"Why, I believe you said yourself that you did not believe in medicine." Thus the days passed on; Bazároff toiled stubbornly and gloomily . . . and meanwhile there was in Nikolái Petróvitch's house a being with whom he not only relieved his heart, but gladly conversed. . . That being was Fénitchka.

His interviews with her generally took place early in the morning in the garden or in the yard; he did not go to her room, and she never went but once to his door to ask him whether or not she ought to bathe Mítya? She not only trusted him, she not only did not fear him, but she bore herself in his presence with more freedom and ease than even with Nikolái Petróvitch himself. It is difficult to say whence this arose; perhaps from the fact that she unconsciously felt in Bazároff the absence of everything savouring of the gentry class, of all that loftiness which both attracts and intimidates. In her eyes he was a capital doctor and a simple man. Without feeling embarrassed by his presence, she busied herself with her baby; and one day, when her head suddenly began to reel and ache, she accepted a spoonful of medicine from his hand. Before Nikolái Petróvitch she seemed to shun Bazároff: she did this not out of craft, but from a certain sentiment of decorum.

Pável Petróvitch she feared more than ever; for some time past he had taken to watching her, and was wont suddenly to make his appearance, as though he had sprung out of the earth behind her back in his English suit, with keen, immovable face, and hands in his pockets.—"He fairly sends a chill down your back," Fénitchka complained to Dunyásha, and the latter in reply sighed and thought of another "unfeeling" man. Bazároff, without himself suspecting the fact, had become the *cruel tyrant* of her soul.

Fénitchka liked Bazároff and he also liked her. Even his face underwent a change when he talked with her: it assumed a clear, almost kindly expression, and a certain playful attentiveness became mingled with its wonted carelessness. Fénitchka grew handsomer with every passing day. There is a period in the life of young women when they suddenly begin to blossom out and unfold like summer roses; this period had arrived for Fénitchka. Everything contributed thereto, even the sultry July heat which then prevailed. Clad in a thin white gown, she herself seemed whiter and lighter: sunburn did not affect her, and the heat, from which she could not guard herself, communicated a faint rose tint to her cheeks and ears, and infusing a gentle lassitude into all her body, was reflected with dreamy languor in her beautiful eyes. She could hardly work at all; her hands simply fell into her lap. She hardly walked

at all and kept groaning and complaining with amusing weakness.

"Thou shouldst bathe more frequently,"—Nikolái Petróvitch said to her. He had built a large bath-house, covered with canvas, in that one of his ponds which had not already quite dried up.

"Okh, Nikolái Petróvitch! But one would die before getting to the pond, and to walk back would kill one. There 's no shade in the garden, you see."

"There is no shade, it is true,"—replied Nikolái Petróvitch, and mopped his brows.

One day, about seven o'clock in the morning, Bazároff, as he was returning from a stroll, found Fénitchka in the lilac arbour, long since out of bloom, but still green and thick. She was sitting on the bench with a white kerchief thrown over her head, according to her custom; beside her lay a whole sheaf of red and white roses, still wet with dew. He bade her good morning.

"Ah! Evgény Vasílitch!" she said, and raised the edge of her kerchief a little to look at him, in which operation her arm was bared to the elbow.

"What are you doing here?"—said Bazároff, seating himself by her side.—"Are you binding up a bouquet?"

"Yes; for the breakfast table. Nikolái Petróvitch likes it."

"But it is still a long time to breakfast. What a mass of flowers!"

"I picked them now because it will get hot, and it will be impossible to go out. It is only at this hour that one can breathe. I have lost all my strength with this heat. I 'm beginning to be afraid that I am falling ill."

"What a whimsical idea! Here, let me feel your pulse."—Bazároff took her hand, sought the evenly-beating artery, and did not even count its pulsations.—"You will live a hundred years,"—he said as he released her arm.

"Akh, God forbid!" she exclaimed.

"Why? Don't you want to live a long time?"

"Yes, but a hundred years! Our grandmother was eighty-five years old—and what a martyr she was! Black, deaf, bent, she coughed incessantly; she was only a burden to herself. What a life!"

"So it is better to be young?"

"Of course; why not?"

"But how is it better? Tell me."

"What do you mean by 'how'? Here I am young now, I can do everything,—I go and come, and fetch and carry, and I am not obliged to ask any one. . . What can be better?"

"Why, it 's all the same to me whether I am young or old."

"What is it you say—that it is all the same? What you say is impossible."

"Come, judge for yourself, Fedósya Nikoláevna; of what use to me is my youth? I live alone, a poor, wretched fellow. . . . . ."

" That always depends on you."

" That 's precisely the point, that it does not depend on me! I wish somebody would take pity on me."

Fénitchka gazed askance at Bazároff, but said nothing.—" What book have you there? "—she asked after a pause.

" This? It is a learned, wise book."

" And you are always studying? Does n't it bore you? I think you must know everything by this time."

" Evidently, I don't know everything. Try to read a little of this."

" But I shall not understand anything. Is it in Russian? "—asked Fénitchka, grasping the heavily bound book with both hands.—" How thick it is! "

" Yes, it is in Russian."

" That makes no difference; I shall not understand anything."

" But I am not giving it to you with the object of having you understand it. I want to watch you while you read. When you read, the tip of your little nose moves very prettily."

Fénitchka, who was beginning to decipher in an undertone the first article which came to hand " about creosote," broke out laughing, and threw aside the book . . . it slid from the bench to the ground.

"I am also fond of seeing you laugh,"—said Bazároff.

"Do stop!"

"I love to hear you talk. It is like the babbling of a brook."

Fénitchka turned away her head.—"What a queer man you are!"—she said, her fingers straying among the flowers.—"And why should you care to listen to me? You have had conversation with such clever folks."

"Ekh, Fedósya Nikoláevna! believe me: all the clever ladies in the world are not worth your elbow."

"Come, now, you have invented something else!"—whispered Fénitchka, and folded her arms.

Bazároff picked the book up from the ground.—"This is a medical book: why do you fling it away?"

"A medical book?"—repeated Fénitchka, and turned toward him.—"But do you know what? Ever since you gave me those drops—you remember?—Mítya has slept so well! I can't think how to thank you; you are so kind, really."

"Well, as a matter of fact, one should pay the doctor,"—remarked Bazároff with a grin.—"Doctors are greedy fellows, you know."

Fénitchka raised her eyes to Bazároff, and they seemed still darker than usual, owing to the whit-

ish reflection which fell upon the upper part of her face. She did not know whether he was jesting or not.

"If you like, we will pay you, with pleasure.... I must ask Nikolái Petróvitch. . ."

"But do you think I want money?"—Bazároff interrupted her.—"No, I want no money from you."

"What then?"—said Fénitchka.

"What?"—repeated Bazároff.—"Guess."

"I never can guess anything!"

"Then I will tell you; I want .... one of these roses."

Again Fénitchka burst out laughing and even clasped her hands, so amusing did Bazároff's desire seem to her. She laughed, and at the same time she felt flattered. Bazároff gazed intently at her.

"Very well, very well,"—she said at last, and bending toward the bench she began to sort over the roses.—"Which would you like—a red or a white one?"

"A red one, but not too large."

She straightened herself up.—"Here, take it,"—she said, but immediately drew back her outstretched hand, and biting her lip, cast a glance at the entrance to the arbour—then began to listen.

"What 's the matter?"—inquired Bazároff.—"Nikolái Petróvitch?"

"No. . . . He has gone to the fields . . . and I 'm not afraid of him . . . . but as for Pável Petróvitch. . . . . It seemed to me . . . . ."

"What?"

"It seemed to me that *he* was walking there. No . . . there is no one. Take it."—Fénitchka gave Bazároff a rose.

"What makes you afraid of Pável Petróvitch?"

"He always frightens me. Whether he says anything or not, he looks queer. And certainly you don't like him either. You remember you used to be forever disputing with him. I don't know what you were disputing about, but I could see that you twisted him about so and so. . . ."

Fénitchka demonstrated with her hands how, in her opinion, Bazároff had twisted Pável Petróvitch about.

Bazároff smiled.—"And if there had been any danger of his vanquishing me you would have stood up for me?"—he inquired.

"How should I have stood up for you? Why, no one can overcome you."

"Do you think so? But I know a hand which, if it wished, could knock me over with one finger."

"What hand is that?"

"Is it possible that you do not know?—Smell and see how splendid is the perfume of the rose you have given me."

Fénitchka stretched out her neck and put her

face close to the flower. . . The kerchief slipped from her head to her shoulders; a soft mass of shining black hair, slightly dishevelled, was revealed to view.

"Wait; I want to smell it with you,"—said Bazároff, and he bent over and kissed her firmly on her parted lips.

She shuddered, and repelled him with both hands against his breast, but her resistance was weak, and he was able to repeat and prolong his kisses.

A dry cough resounded behind the lilacs. Fénitchka instantly moved to the other end of the bench. Pável Petróvitch made his appearance, made a slight bow, and saying, with a sort of malicious dejection—"Are you here?"—withdrew.

Fénitchka immediately gathered up all her roses and went out of the arbour. "Shame on you, Evgény Vasílievitch,"—she whispered as she went. Unfeigned reproach was audible in her whisper.

Bazároff suddenly recalled another scene of recent occurrence, and felt conscience-stricken and scornfully vexed with himself. But he immediately shook his head, ironically congratulated himself on his "formal entrance on the career of a Lovelace," and went off to his chamber.

But Pável Petróvitch quitted the garden, and strolling slowly, reached the forest. He remained

there for a rather long time, and when he returned to breakfast Nikolái Petróvitch asked him with anxiety whether he was well—so dark had his face grown.

"As thou knowest, I sometimes suffer from an overflow of bile," Pável Petróvitch answered him with composure.

XXIV

Two hours later he knocked at Bazároff's door.

"I must make my excuses for disturbing you in your learned occupations," he began, as he seated himself on a chair near the window and rested both hands on a handsome cane with an ivory handle—(he generally walked without a cane),—"but I am compelled to request that you will bestow upon me five minutes of your time—no more."

"All my time is at your disposal,"—replied Bazároff, over whose face something had flitted as soon as Pável Petróvitch crossed the threshold of the door.

"Five minutes will suffice for me. I have come to propound one question to you."

"A question? What is it about?"

"Be so good as to hear me out. At the beginning of your sojourn in my brother's house, when as yet I had not denied myself the pleasure of conversing with you, I chanced to hear you express your views on many subjects; but so far as my memory serves me, neither between us nor in my presence did the conversation turn upon the subject of duels or of duelling in general. Per-

mit me to inquire, what is your opinion on that point?"

Bazároff, who had risen at Pável Petróvitch's entrance, seated himself on the edge of a chair and folded his arms.

"This is my opinion,"—said he:—"From the theoretical point of view a duel is a piece of folly; but from the practical point of view,—it is quite another matter."

"That is, you mean to say, if I have understood you aright, that whatever may be your theoretical views as to duelling in practice, you would not allow yourself to be insulted without demanding satisfaction."

"You have perfectly divined my thought."

"Very good, sir. I am very much pleased to hear this from you. Your words free me from uncertainty. . . ."

"From indecision, you mean to say."

"That is the same thing, sir; I am expressing myself in this manner so that I may be understood; I 'm no seminary rat. Your words release me from a certain sad necessity. I have made up my mind to fight with you."

Bazároff opened his eyes wide.—"With me?"

"Yes, without fail."

"But what for? good gracious."

"I might explain the cause to you,"—began Pável Petróvitch:—"but I prefer to remain silent on that point. To my taste you are super-

fluous here; I cannot endure you, I despise you, and if that is not enough for you . . . ."

Pável Petróvitch's eyes flashed. . . Bazároff's began to flame also.

" Very good, sir,"—said he.—" Further explanations are unnecessary. The fancy has seized you to make a trial of your chivalrous spirit on me. I might refuse you that satisfaction; but let that pass."

" I am intensely indebted to you,"—repiled Pável Petróvitch,—" and can now hope that you will accept my challenge without forcing me to have recourse to violent measures."

" That is, speaking without allegories, to that cane? "—remarked Bazároff coolly.—" That is quite correct. There is no necessity whatever for your insulting me. And it is not entirely devoid of danger. You can remain a gentleman. . . . I accept your challenge, also in a gentlemanly manner."

" Very good indeed,"—said Pável Petróvitch, and placed his cane in a corner.—" We will immediately say a few words about the conditions of our duel; but first I should like to understand whether you consider it indispensable to resort to the formality of a small preliminary quarrel, which might serve as the pretext for my challenge? "

" No. It is better without any formalities."

" I think so myself. I also assume that it is in-

opportune to enter into the genuine causes of our conflict. We cannot endure each other. What more is needed?"

"What more is needed?"—repeated Bazároff ironically.

"As regards the conditions themselves of the duel, as we shall have no seconds,—for where are we to get them?"

"Precisely; where are we to get them?"

"I have the honour to propose to you the following: That we shall fight to-morrow morning early, let us say at six o'clock, behind the grove, with pistols; the barrier at ten paces. . . ."

"Ten paces? that 's so; we hate each other at that distance."

"We might make it eight,"—remarked Pável Petróvitch.

"We might; why not?"

"We will fire twice; and each of us will put a note in his pocket—in case of accidents—in which he will cast the blame for his death upon himself."

"On that point I am not quite in accord with you,"—said Bazároff.—"It smacks somewhat of a French romance,—it lacks probability."

"Possibly. But you must admit that it would be unpleasant to subject one's self to the suspicion of having committed murder."

"I do admit that. But there is a means of avoiding that sad reproach. We shall have no seconds, but we may have a witness."

"Who, precisely, permit me to ask?"

"Why, Piótr."

"What Piótr?"

"Your brother's valet. He is a man who stands on the crest of contemporary civilisation and will play his part with all the *comme il faut* indispensable in such cases."

"It strikes me that you are jesting, my dear sir."

"Not in the least. If you will consider my proposition, you will become convinced that it is full of common sense and simplicity. You cannot hide an awl in a bag, and I take it upon myself to prepare Piótr in the proper manner, and bring him to the field of battle."

"You persist in jesting,"—ejaculated Pável Petróvitch, rising from his seat.—"But after the amiable readiness which you have displayed I have no right to be too exacting with you. . . . And so everything is arranged. . . . By the way, you have no pistols?"

"Where should I get any pistols, Pável Petróvitch? I am not a warrior."

"In that case, I offer you mine. You may feel assured that it is five years since I have fired them."

"That is a very comforting piece of news."

Pável Petróvitch got his cane. . . . "And now, my dear sir, it only remains for me to thank you and surrender you to your occupa-

tions again. I have the honour to bid you good morning."

"Farewell until our agreeable meeting, my dear sir,"—said Bazároff, as he escorted his guest to the door.

Pável Petróvitch departed, but Bazároff stood still in front of the door, and suddenly exclaimed: "Whew! the devil! how fine and how stupid! A pretty comedy we have undertaken to play! That 's the way trained dogs dance on their hind legs. But it was impossible to refuse; for I think he would have struck me, and then . . ." (Bazároff turned pale at the mere thought; all his pride rose up in arms.) "Then I should have been obliged to strangle him like a kitten." He returned to his microscope, but his heart was aroused, and the composure which was indispensable for his observations had vanished.—"He saw us today,"—he thought, "but can it be that he is standing up for his brother? But of what importance is a kiss? There 's something else here. Ba! is n't he in love himself? Of course he is; that is as clear as the day. What a complicated mess, when you come to think of it! . . . It 's a bad business!"—he decided at last:—"it 's a bad business, look at it from whichever side you will. In the first place, I must risk my life, and, in any case, go away; and there 's Arkády . . . and that lady-bug, Nikolái Petróvitch. 'T is a bad, bad business."

The day passed somehow in a peculiarly quiet and languid manner. It was as though Fénitchka did not exist in the world; she sat in her little room like a mouse in its hole. Nikolái Petróvitch had a careworn aspect. He had been informed that rust had made its appearance in his wheat, on which he had set special hopes. Pável Petróvitch crushed every one, even Prokófitch, with his icy politeness. Bazároff began a letter to his father, but tore it up and flung it under the table. "If I die,"—he thought, "they will hear of it: but I shall not die. No, I shall live on from hand to mouth in this world for a long time to come." —He ordered Piótr to come to him at daybreak on the following morning for an important affair; Piótr imagined that he wished to take him with him to Petersburg. Bazároff went to bed late, and incoherent dreams tormented him all night long. . . . Madame Odíntzoff hovered before him, but she was his mother, and a kitten with black whiskers followed her, and that kitten was Fénitchka; but Pável Petróvitch presented himself to him as a huge forest, with which, nevertheless, he was compelled to fight. Piótr waked him at four o'clock; he immediately dressed and went out with him.

It was a splendid, cool morning; tiny, motley cloudlets hung like snipe in the clear, pale azure; a fine dew was sprinkled on the leaves and grass, and glistened like silver on the spiders' webs; the

moist dark earth seemed still to retain the rosy traces of the dawn; the songs of larks showered down from all over the sky. Bazároff walked to the grove, seated himself in the shadow at the edge of it, and only then did he reveal to Piótr what service he expected from him. The educated lackey was frightened to death; but Bazároff soothed him with the assurance that he would have nothing to do except stand at a distance and look on, and that he was assuming no responsibility whatever.—"And meanwhile,"—he added,—"think what an important part awaits thee!"—Piótr flung his hands apart, dropped his eyes, and leaned back, all green, against a birch tree.

The road from Márino wound round the grove; a light dust lay upon it, as yet untouched since the preceding day by either wheel or foot. Bazároff involuntarily gazed along the road, plucked and chewed a blade of grass, and kept repeating to himself: "What a piece of stupidity!" The matutinal chill made him shiver once or twice. . . . Piótr stared dejectedly at him, but Bazároff only grinned: he was not afraid.

The sound of a horse's hoofs rang out on the road. . . A peasant made his appearance from behind the trees. He was driving two hobbled horses in front of him, and, as he passed Bazároff, he looked at him rather strangely, without doffing his cap, which obviously disconcerted Piótr as an evil omen. "Here's another fellow who has

risen early,"—thought Bazároff; "but for business, at all events, while we . . . . ."

"I think he 's coming, sir," whispered Piótr suddenly.

Bazároff raised his head and perceived Pável Petróvitch. Clad in a light checked sack-coat and snow-white trousers, he was walking briskly down the road; under his arm he carried a box wrapped up in green cloth.

"Pardon me, I seem to have made you wait," —he said, bowing first to Bazároff and then to Piótr, in whom he at that moment respected something in the nature of a second.—"I did not wish to rouse my valet."

"It is of no consequence, sir,"—replied Bazároff,—"we have only just arrived ourselves."

"Ah! so much the better!"—Pável Petróvitch cast a glance around him.—"There is no one in sight, no one will interfere. . . . ."

"Let us begin."

"You demand no fresh explanations, I suppose?"

"I do not."

"Would you like to load?"—inquired Pável Petróvitch, taking the pistols from their case.

"No; do you load, and I will measure off the paces. My feet are the longer,"—added Bazároff with a sneer.—"One, two, three . . . ."

"Evgény Vasílievitch," — stammered Piótr with difficulty (he was shaking as though in a

fever),—"I don't care what you say, but I am going away."

"Four . . . . five. . . . Go, my dear fellow, go: thou mayest even stand behind a tree and stop up thine ears, only don't shut thine eyes; and if any one falls run and lift him up. Six . . . seven . . . eight. . . . ." Bazároff paused.—"Is this enough?"—he said, addressing Pável Petróvitch;—"or shall I add a couple of paces more?"

"As you like,"—said the latter, ramming in the second bullet.

"Well, let 's add a couple of paces more.—Bazároff drew a line on the ground with the toe of his boot.—"Here 's the barrier. Oh, by the way: how many paces is each of us to go from the barrier? That also is an important question. We did not discuss that yesterday. ."

"Ten, I suppose,"—replied Pável Petróvitch, handing Bazároff both pistols. "Be so good as to make your choice."

"I will. But you must admit, Pável Petróvitch, that our duel is unusual to the point of absurdity. Just look at the face of our second!"

"You always want to jest,"—replied Pável Petróvitch.—"I do not deny the strangeness of our duel, but I considered it my duty to warn you that I intend to fight seriously. *A bon entendeur, salut!*"

"Oh! I do not doubt that we intend to exterminate each other; but why not laugh and com-

bine *utile dulci?* So be it: you talk to me in French, and I 'll talk to you in Latin."

"I shall fight seriously,"—repeated Pável Petróvitch, and went to his post. Bazároff, on his side, counted off ten paces from the barrier, and halted.

"Are you ready?"—asked Pável Petróvitch.

"Perfectly."

"We can advance."

Bazároff moved slowly forward, and Pável Petróvitch followed his example, thrusting his left hand into his pocket, and gradually raising the barrel of his pistol. . . . "He is aiming straight at my nose,"—thought Bazároff, "and how carefully he is narrowing his eyelids, the bandit! But this is an unpleasant sensation; I will look at his watch-chain. . . ." Something whizzed sharply close to Bazároff's ear, and at that moment the sound of a shot rang out.—"I heard it, consequently I 'm all right," flashed through his head. He advanced another step, and, without taking aim, pressed the trigger.

Pável Petróvitch gave a slight start and clapped his hand to his hip.—A stream of blood flowed down his white trousers.

Bazároff flung aside his pistol and approached his adversary.—"You are wounded?"—he said.

"You had the right to call me to the barrier,"—returned Pável Petróvitch:—"but that is

a mere trifle. According to the agreement, each of us has another shot."

"Well, excuse me, that will do for another time,"—replied Bazároff, and caught Pável Petróvitch, who was beginning to turn pale, in his arms.—"I 'm not a duellist now, but a doctor; and, first of all, I must inspect your wound. Piótr! come here, Piótr! where art thou hiding thyself?"

"All this is nonsense. . . . I need assistance from no one,"—faltered Pável Petróvitch,—"and . . . we must . . . fire . . again. . ." He tried to twirl his moustache, but his hand weakened, his eyes rolled up, and he lost consciousness.

"Here 's a pretty state of things! A swoon! What 's the cause of this!"—involuntarily exclaimed Bazároff, as he laid Pável Petróvitch down on the grass.—"Let 's see what sort of a performance this is."—He pulled out his handkerchief, wiped away the blood, and felt of the wound. . . . "The bone is uninjured,"—he muttered between his teeth,—"the bullet passed through not far below the skin; one muscle, the *vastus externus,* is hurt. He can dance, if he likes, three weeks hence! . . . But a swoon! Okh, these nervous people! Just see how thin his skin is!"

"Is he killed?"—rustled Piótr's quaking voice behind his back.

Bazároff glanced round.—"Run for water as quickly as possible, my good fellow, and he will outlive you and me."

But the perfected servant appeared not to understand his words, and did not stir from the spot. Pável Petróvitch slowly opened his eyes. "He is dying!" whispered Piótr, and began to cross himself.

"You are right. . . What a stupid physiognomy!"—said the wounded gentleman, with a forced smile.

"Come, now, run for water, you devil!"—shouted Bazároff.

"It is not necessary. . . It was only a momentary *vertige*. . . . Help me to sit up . . . there, that 's it. . . . All that is needed is to bind up this scratch with something, and then I will walk home, or a drozhky can be sent for me. The duel need not be renewed, if that suits you. You have behaved nobly . . . . to-day—to-day, pray observe."

"It is not worth while to revert to the past,"—returned Bazároff,—"and as for the future, it is not worth while to bother our heads about that either, because I intend to decamp without delay. Now let me bandage your leg; your wound is not dangerous, but it will be better, in any case, to stop the flow of blood. But first it is indispensable that this mortal should be brought to consciousness."

Bazároff shook Piótr by the collar and sent him for a drozhky.

"See to it that thou dost not alarm my brother,"—Pável Petróvitch said to him.—"Don't dare to announce it to him."

Piótr flew off at headlong speed; and while he was running for the drozhky the two adversaries sat on the ground and held their peace. Pável Petróvitch tried not to look at Bazároff; nevertheless, he was not willing to be reconciled to him; he was ashamed of his own arrogance, of his lack of success: he was ashamed of this whole affair which he had instigated, although he also felt that it could not have ended in a more favourable manner. "He will not hang on here any longer, at all events,"—he soothed himself:—"and for that, thanks." The silence continued, awkward and oppressive. Neither of them was comfortable. Each of them recognised the fact that the other understood him. This consciousness is agreeable to friends and extremely disagreeable to enemies, especially when it is impossible for them either to explain themselves or to separate.

"Have n't I bandaged your leg too tightly?"—asked Bazároff at last.

"No, never mind, it is very well done,"—replied Pável Petróvitch, and after a brief pause, he added:—"it will not be possible to deceive my brother; we shall have to tell him that we quarrelled over politics."

"Very good,"—said Bazároff.—"You can say that I abused all anglomaniacs."

"Capital. What do you suppose that man is thinking about us now?"—went on Pável Petróvitch, pointing at that same peasant who, a few minutes previous to the duel, had driven past Bazároff the hobbled horses, and on returning along the road had "turned out," and had pulled off his cap at the sight of "the gentry."

"Who knows!"—replied Bazároff:—"the most likely thing of all is that he thinks nothing.—The Russian peasant is that same mysterious stranger of whom Mrs. Radcliffe used to prate so much. Who can understand him? He does not understand himself."

"Ah! There you go again!"—Pável Petróvitch was beginning, then suddenly exclaimed:—"See what our fool of a Piótr has done! There 's my brother galloping hither!"

Bazároff turned round and perceived the pale face of Nikolái Petróvitch, who was seated in the drozhky. He sprang out before it came to a halt and flew to his brother.—"What 's the meaning of this?"—he said in an agitated voice:—"Evgény Vasílitch, for heaven's sake, what is this?"

"Never mind,"—replied Pável Petróvitch:—"there was no necessity for disquieting you. Mr. Bazároff and I have had a little quarrel, and I have paid for it a bit."

"But for God's sake, what was the cause of all this?"

"How can I explain it to thee? Bazároff expressed himself disrespectfully about Sir Robert Peel. I hasten to add that I alone am to blame for all this, and Mr. Bazároff has behaved excellently. I challenged him."

"But thou art bleeding, good gracious!"

"And didst thou suppose that I had water in my veins? But this bloodletting is really advantageous for me. Is n't that so, doctor? Help me to get into the drozhky, and don't yield to melancholy. To-morrow I shall be well. There, that 's right; very good indeed. Drive on, coachman."

Nikolái Petróvitch walked after the drozhky. Bazároff made a motion to remain behind. . . . .

"I must request you to attend to my brother," —Nikolái Petróvitch said to him,—"until we get another physician from the town."

Bazároff bowed in silence.

An hour later Pável Petróvitch was lying in bed, with his leg skilfully bandaged. The whole house was in a commotion: Fénitchka swooned. Nikolái Petróvitch quietly wrung his hands, but Pável Petróvitch laughed and jested, especially with Bazároff; he had donned a fine batiste shirt, a dandified morning jacket, and a fez; he would not allow them to draw down the shades at the windows, and lamented amusingly about the necessity of abstaining from food.

But toward nightfall, he became feverish; his head began to ache. The doctor from the town made his appearance. (Nikolái Petróvitch had not obeyed his brother, and Bazároff himself had not wished it; he had sat in his own room all day long, all sallow and cross, and had only run in to see the invalid for the very briefest space; twice he had chanced to encounter Fénitchka, but she had jumped away from him in horror.) The new doctor advised cooling beverages, but otherwise confirmed Bazároff's assertions that no danger was to be apprehended. Nikolái Petróvitch told him that his brother had wounded himself through heedlessness, to which the doctor replied: "H'm!" —but on receiving upon the spot twenty-five rubles, silver, in hand, he said: "You don't say so! that often happens, really."

No one in the house went to bed or undressed. Nikolái Petróvitch kept stealing into his brother's room on tiptoe and stealing out again on tiptoe: the latter dozed, groaned softly, said to him in French: "*Couchez-vous*,"—and asked for a drink. Once Nikolái Petróvitch made Fénitchka bring him a glass of lemonade; Pável Petróvitch regarded her intently, and drank the glass to the bottom. Toward morning the fever increased somewhat, a slight delirium made its appearance. At first Pável Petróvitch uttered incoherent words; then he suddenly opened his eyes, and perceiving his brother at his bedside bending anx-

iously over him, he said:—"Fénitchka has something in common with Nelly, has n't she, Nikolái?"

"With what Nelly, Pásha?"

"How canst thou ask? With Princess R. . . . Especially in the upper part of the face. *C'est de la même famille.*"

Nikolái Petróvitch made no reply, but marvelled within himself at the vitality of old feelings in a man. "It 's coming to the surface," he thought.

"Akh, how I love that vain creature!"—moaned Pável Petróvitch, sadly flinging his arms above his head.—"I cannot endure it when some audacious fellow dares to touch . . . ." he stammered a few moments later.

Nikolái Petróvitch merely sighed; he did not suspect to whom those words applied.

Bazároff presented himself to him at eight o'clock on the following morning. He had already managed to pack, and to set at liberty all his frogs, insects, and birds.

"You have come to bid me farewell?"—said Nikolái Petróvitch, rising to greet him.

"Exactly so, sir."

"I understand you, and I fully approve of your course. My poor brother, of course, is to blame: and he has been punished. He told me himself that he had placed you in such a position that it was impossible for you to refuse. I believe

that you could not have avoided this duel, which . . . which, to a certain extent, is accounted for merely by the constant antagonism of your mutual views." (Nikolái Petróvitch had got entangled in his words.) "My brother is a man of the old stamp, irascible and morose. . . . Thank God that it has ended thus. I have taken all necessary measures to avoid publicity. . . ."

"I will leave you my address, in case any unpleasantness arises,"—remarked Bazároff carelessly.

"I hope that no unpleasantness will arise, Evgény Vasílitch. . . . I am very sorry that your sojourn in my house should have had such . . . such an ending. I am the more distressed because Arkády . . . . ."

"I shall certainly see him again,"—returned Bazároff, in whom every sort of "explanation" and "declaration" always aroused a sentiment of impatience;—"if I do not, I beg that you will give him my regards and accept the expression of my regret."

"And I beg . . ." replied Nikolái Petróvitch, with a bow. But Bazároff did not await the end of his phrase, and left the room.

On hearing that Bazároff was about to depart, Pável Petróvitch expressed a wish to see him and to shake hands with him. But here also Bazároff remained as cold as ice; he comprehended that Pável Petróvitch wished to appear magnanimous.

He did not succeed in bidding Fénitchka good-bye: he merely exchanged a glance with her through a window. Her face seemed sad to him. "She 'll go to destruction probably!"—he said to himself. . . . "Well, she 'll extricate herself, somehow or other!"

On the other hand, Piótr was so overcome with emotion that he wept on his shoulder, until Bazároff froze him with the question: "Was n't he a cry-baby?" while Dunyásha was compelled to flee to the grove to conceal her agitation. The cause of all this woe clambered into the peasant cart, lighted a cigar, and when, at the fourth verst, at a turn of the road, the Kirsánoff farm, with its new manor-house, presented itself, all spread out in a line to his eyes for the last time, he merely spat, and muttering: "Cursed stuck-up gentry!" wrapped himself more closely in his cloak.

Pável Petróvitch soon improved; but he was obliged to keep his bed for about a week. He bore his *captivity*, as he expressed it, with considerable patience, only he made a great fuss over his toilet, and kept giving orders that they should fumigate with eau de cologne. Nikolái Petróvitch read the newspapers to him; Fénitchka waited on him as of yore, brought his bouillon, lemonade, soft-boiled eggs, tea; but a secret terror took possession of her every time she entered his chamber. Pável Petróvitch's unexpected be-

haviour had frightened all the people in the house, and her most of all; Prokófitch alone remained unperturbed, and explained that the gentry were wont, in his time, to fight "only noble gentlemen, among themselves, but loafers they would have ordered to be thrashed in the stables for their insolence."

Fénitchka's conscience hardly reproached her at all; but the thought of the real cause of the quarrel tortured her at times; and, moreover, Pável Petróvitch gazed at her in such a strange way . . . . in such a way, that even when she had her back turned toward him she felt his eyes upon her. She grew thin from incessant inward perturbation, and, as is usual, became prettier than ever.

One day—it happened in the morning,—Pável Petróvitch felt well, and had transferred himself from the bed to the divan, and Nikolái Petróvitch, after inquiring about his health, had betaken himself to the threshing-floor. Fénitchka brought a cup of tea, and, placing it on a small table, was on the point of withdrawing. Pável Petróvitch detained her.

"Whither away in such haste, Fedósya Nikoláevna,"—he began:—"have you something to do?"

"No, sir . . . I must pour out the tea."

"Dunyásha can do that without you; sit a while with the sick man. By the way, I must have a talk with you."

Fénitchka silently seated herself on the edge of an arm-chair.

"Listen,"—said Pável Petróvitch, and tugged at his moustache,—"I have long wished to ask you: you seem to be afraid of me?"

"I, sir? . . ."

"Yes, you. You never look at me, just as though your conscience were not clear."

Fénitchka blushed, but glanced at Pável Petróvitch. He struck her as rather strange, and her heart quivered softly.

"Your conscience is clear, is n't it?"—he asked her.

"Why should n't it be clear?"—she whispered.

"As if there were not cause?—However, before whom should you be guilty? Before me? That is not probable. Before other persons here in the house? That also is an impossibility. Before my brother, perchance? But surely you love him?"

"I do."

"With all your soul, with all your heart?"

"I love Nikolái Petróvitch with all my heart."

"Really? Look at me, Fénitchka" (he called her this for the first time) . . . . "You know it is a great sin to lie!"

"I am not lying, Pável Petróvitch. If I did not love Nikolái Petróvitch, I should not want to live any longer."

"And you would not betray him for any one?"

"For whom should I betray him?"

"As if there were no one! Why, for example, for that gentleman who went away from here."

Fénitchka rose to her feet.—"O Lord, my God, Pável Petróvitch, why do you torture me? What have I done to you? How is it possible to talk like that? . . . ."

"Fénitchka,"—said Pável Petróvitch in a melancholy voice,—"you know I saw . . . . ."

"What did you see, sir?"

"Why, yonder . . . in the arbour."

Fénitchka turned all crimson, to her very hair and her ears.—"And how am I to blame for that?"—she articulated with difficulty.

Pável Petróvitch half rose.—"You are not to blame? No? Not in the least?"

"I love no one in the world but Nikolái Petróvitch, and I shall love him forever!"—said Fénitchka, with sudden force, while sobs swelled her throat. "And as for what you saw, I shall say, at the Last Judgment, that I am not and was not to blame for that; and I would rather die at once, if I am to be suspected of such a thing, as that . . . . . toward my benefactor Nikolái Petróvitch. . . . I . . . ."

But here her voice failed her, and, at the same time, she felt Pável Petróvitch grasp and squeeze her hand. . . . She looked at him and was fairly petrified. He had become more pallid than before; his eyes were shining, and, what was most

wonderful of all, a heavy, isolated tear was rolling down his cheek.

"Fénitchka!"—he said, in a queer sort of whisper:—"love, love my brother! He is such a kind, good man! Do not betray him for any one in the world, do not listen to anybody's speeches! Think, what can be more dreadful than to love and not be beloved! Never abandon my poor Nikolái!"

Fénitchka's eyes grew dry, and her terror passed off,—so great was her amazement. But what was her state of mind when Pável Petróvitch—Pável Petróvitch himself—pressed her hand to his lips, and fairly hung over it, not kissing it, and only sighing from time to time in a convulsive manner. . . .

"O Lord,"—she thought,—"can it be that he has a fit? . . ."

But at that moment his whole ruined life was throbbing within him.

The stairs creaked under swift footsteps. . . . He thrust her away from him, and threw his head back on his pillow. The door opened,—and Nikolái Petróvitch made his appearance, merry, fresh, rosy-cheeked. Mítya, as fresh and rosy as his father, clad only in his little shirt, was jumping about on his breast, clutching with his little bare feet at the big buttons of his rustic coat.

Fénitchka fairly flew to him, and throwing her arms around both him and her son, dropped her head on his shoulder. Nikolái Petróvitch was as-

tonished; Fénitchka, reserved and modest, had never caressed him in the presence of a third person.

"What is the matter with thee?"—he said, and glancing at his brother, he transferred Mítya to her.—"Thou dost not feel worse?"—he asked, approaching Pável Petróvitch.

The latter had buried his face in a batiste handkerchief.—"No . . . it is just . . . . . never mind. . . . . On the contrary, I am much better."

"Thou wert in too much of a hurry to get to the divan. Whither art thou going?"—added Nikolái Petróvitch, turning to Fénitchka; but she had already banged the door behind her.—"I had brought my sturdy young warrior to show thee; he was longing for his uncle. Why has she taken him away? But what ails thee? Has anything happened between you two?"

"Brother!"—said Pável Petróvitch solemnly.

Nikolái Petróvitch quaked. Dread fell upon him—he himself did not know why.

"Brother,"—repeated Pável Petróvitch,—"give me thy word to fulfil my request."

"What request? Speak."

"It is very important; in my opinion, the entire happiness of thy life depends upon it. All this time I have been meditating a great deal about what I am now going to say to thee. . . . Brother, fulfil thy duty, the duty of an honest and noble man; put an end to the scandal and bad

example which is caused by thee, the best of men!"

"What is it thou meanest to say, Pável?"

"Marry Fénitchka. . . . She loves thee. She is the mother of thy son."

Nikolái Petróvitch retreated a pace and clasped his hands.—"Is it thou who sayest this, Pável? —thou whom I have always regarded as the most inexorable antagonist of such marriages! Thou sayest this! But can it be that thou dost not know that it was solely out of respect for thee that I have not fulfilled that which thou hast rightly designated as my duty?"

"It was a mistake for thee to respect me in this instance,"—returned Pável Petróvitch with a melancholy smile.—"I am beginning to think that Bazároff was right when he reproached me with being aristocratic. No, my dear brother, it is time for us to cease putting on airs, and think of the world: we are already old and peaceable men; it is time for us to lay aside all vanity. We will, as thou sayest, fulfil our duty; and, lo, we shall also receive happiness into the bargain."

Nikolái Petróvitch flew to embrace his brother.

"Thou hast finally opened my eyes!"—he cried.—"Not in vain have I always maintained that thou art the kindest and wisest man in the world; but now I see that thou art as sagacious as thou art magnanimous."

"Softly, softly,"—Pável Petróvitch inter-

rupted him.—"Do not irritate the leg of thy sagacious brother, who, at the age of fifty, has fought a duel like an ensign. So that affair is settled: Fénitchka is to be my . . . . *belle-sœur.*"

"My dear Pável! But what will Arkády say?"

"Arkády? He will go into raptures, take my word for it! Marriage is not among his principles, but the sentiment of equality in him will be flattered. And, in fact, what are castes *au dix-neuvième siècle?*"

"Akh, Pável, Pável! let me kiss thee again. Don't be afraid, I will be cautious."

The brothers embraced.

"What dost thou think,—would it not be well for thee to announce thine intention to her at once?"—asked Pável Petróvitch.

"What need is there of haste?"—returned Nikolái Petróvitch.—"Did you discuss it?"

"Did we discuss it? *Quelle idée!*"

"Well, very good. First of all, get well, and that will not escape us; we must think it over thoroughly, consider . . . ."

"But I thought thou hadst made up thy mind?"

"Of course I have; and I thank thee from my soul. Now I will leave thee; thou must rest; all agitation is injurious to thee. . . . But we will discuss it again. Go to sleep, my dear soul, and God give thee health!"

"Why does he thank me so?" thought Pável

Petróvitch, when he was left alone. "As if it did not depend on him! And I, as soon as he is married, will go away somewhere, as far as possible, to Dresden or Florence, and I will live there until I die."

Pável Petróvitch moistened his brow with eau de cologne, and closed his eyes. Illuminated by the brilliant daylight, his handsome, emaciated head lay on the white pillow like the head of a corpse. . . And he was a corpse.

XXV

At Nikólskoe, in the garden, under the shadow of a lofty ash-tree, Kátya and Arkády were sitting on a turf bench; on the ground beside them Fifi had established himself, imparting to his long body that elegant curve which is known to sportsmen as "the grey-hare pose." Both Arkády and Kátya were silent; he held in his hands a half-opened book, while she was collecting from a basket the crumbs of white bread which still remained in it, and tossing them to a small family of sparrows, which, with the pusillanimous audacity peculiar to their kind, were hopping and chirping around her very feet. A faint breeze, rustling the leaves of the ash, shifted softly to and fro along the dark path and Fifi's yellow back, pale-golden patches of light; a level shade encompassed Arkády and Kátya; only from time to time did a brilliant streak kindle in her hair. Both maintained silence; but precisely the manner in which they were silent, in which they sat side by side, expressed trusting intimacy: neither of them seemed to be thinking of his neighbour, yet each was secretly glad of the other's proximity. Their faces also have undergone a change since

we last beheld them: Arkády seems more composed, Kátya more animated, more self-possessed.

"Don't you think,"—began Arkády,—"that the ash-tree bears a very appropriate name in Russian:[1] no other tree pierces the air so lightly and *clearly* as it does."

Kátya raised her eyes aloft, and said, "Yes," and Arkády thought: "This one does not reproach me for expressing myself in *fine language.*"

"I don't like Heine,"—began Kátya, indicating with her eyes the book which Arkády held in his hands:—"either when he laughs or when he weeps; I love him when he is thoughtful and sad."

"But he pleases me when he laughs,"—remarked Arkády.

"Those are the old traces in you of your satirical tendency. . ." ("Old traces!"—thought Arkády;—"if Bazároff were to hear that!") "Wait, we will make you over."

"Who will make me over? You?"

"Who?—my sister; Porfíry Platónovitch, with whom you no longer quarrel; aunty, whom you escorted to church the day before yesterday."

"I could n't refuse! And as for Anna Sergyéevna, she herself, you remember, agreed with Evgény on many points."

[1] *Yasen*, "ash tree;" *yasno*, "clearly."—TRANSLATOR.

"My sister was under his influence then, just as you were."

"Just as I was? Do you mean to say that you notice that I have already freed myself from his influence?"

Kátya made no reply.

"I know,"—pursued Arkády,—"that you never did like him."

"I cannot judge of him."

"Do you know what, Katerína Sergyéevna? Every time I hear that answer I do not believe in it. . . . There is no man as to whom any one of us cannot pronounce judgment! That is simply an evasion."

"Well, then I will tell you that I . . . . do not exactly dislike him, but I feel that he is a stranger to me, and I have nothing in common with him . . . . . and neither have you."

"Why so?"

"How can I tell you? . . . He is a bird of prey, while you and I are tame."

"And am I tame also?"

Kátya nodded.

Arkády scratched behind his ear.—"See here, Katerína Sergyéevna, you know that is really insulting."

"Would you really like to be a bird of prey?"

"A bird of prey—no, but strong, energetic."

"That cannot be had by wishing. . . There 's your friend—he does not wish it, but it is in him."

"H'm! So you think he had great influence on Anna Sergyéevna?"

"Yes. But no one can keep the upper hand of her for long,"—added Kátya, in an undertone.

"Why do you think that?"

"She is very proud. . . . I did not mean to say that . . . . she sets a high value on her independence."

"And who does not?"—asked Arkády, and through his mind there flashed: "What good does it do her?"—"What good does it do her?" also flashed through Kátya's mind. When young people meet often on friendly terms, the same thoughts are constantly occurring to them.

Arkády smiled, and moving a little closer to Kátya, said in a whisper:—"Confess that you are a little afraid of her."

"Of whom?"

"Of *her,*"—repeated Arkády significantly.

"And you?"—questioned Kátya, in her turn.

"And I also; observe, I say: *and* I *also.*"

Kátya shook her finger at him.—"I am surprised,"—she began:—"my sister has never been so favourably disposed toward you as at precisely the present moment; much more so than during your first visit."

"Here 's news!"

"But have n't you noticed it? Are n't you pleased?"

Arkády meditated.

"How have I won Anna Sergyéevna's good will? Must it not have been because I brought her your mother's letter?"

"For that reason, and there are other causes, which I will not mention."

"Why not?"

"I won't tell."

"Oh! I know: you are very stubborn."

"I am."

"And observing."

Kátya shot a sidelong glance at Arkády.—"Perhaps that enrages you? What are you thinking about?"

"I am thinking where you could have got that observation which you really do possess. You are so timorous, distrustful; you are afraid of everybody. . . ."

"I have lived much alone; one begins, involuntarily, to think a great deal under such circumstances. But am I really afraid of everybody?"

Arkády threw a penetrating glance at Kátya.

"All this is very fine,"—he went on,—"but people in your position—I mean to say, with your means—rarely possess that gift; it is difficult for the truth to make its way to them, as it is to kings."

"But I 'm not rich, you know."

Arkády was surprised, and did not at once understand Kátya. "And, in fact, all the property

does belong to her sister!" occurred to his mind; this thought was not unpleasant to him.—"How well you said that!" he said.

"What?"

"You spoke well; simply without confusion or affectation. By the way: I imagine that there must be something peculiar—a sort of ostentation—in the feeling of a person who knows and says that he is poor."

"I have experienced nothing of the sort, thanks to my sister; I mentioned my position simply because the words slipped off my tongue."

"Exactly. But confess that there is in you a little bit of that ostentation of which I just spoke."

"For example?"

"For example, of course,—pardon my question,—you would not marry a wealthy man."

"If I loved him very much. . . No, I think I would not marry him even then."

"Ah! there, you see!"—exclaimed Arkády, and, after a brief pause, he added:—"But why would n't you marry him?"

"Because they sing in the ballad about inequality."

"Perhaps you want to rule, or . . . ."

"Oh, no! Why should I? On the contrary, I am ready to submit; only inequality is oppressive. But I do understand respecting one's self and submitting; that is happiness; but not an ex-

istence of subjugation. . . No, I am satisfied as I am."

"Satisfied as you are,"—repeated Arkády after Kátya.—"Yes, yes,"—he went on;—"it is not for nothing that you are of one blood with Anna Sergyéevna; you are as independent as she is; but you are more secretive. I am convinced that on no account would you be the first to express your feelings, no matter how powerful and sacred they might be. . . ."

"But how could it be otherwise?"—inquired Kátya.

"You are equally clever; you have as much character as she has, if not more. . . ."

"Do not compare me with my sister, please,"—interposed Kátya hurriedly,—"it is too disadvantageous to me. You appear to have forgotten that my sister is a beauty and a wit, and . . . you, in particular, Arkády Nikoláitch, ought not to utter such words, and with such a serious countenance into the bargain."

"What does this mean, 'You in particular?'—and from what do you conclude that I am jesting?"

"Of course you are jesting."

"Do you think so? But what if I am convinced of what I am saying? What if I am of the opinion that I have not even yet expressed myself with sufficient force?"

"I don't understand you."

"Really? Well, now I see: I really have exaggerated your power of observation."

"What?"

Arkády made no reply and turned away, while Kátya rummaged out a few more crumbs in her basket, and began to toss them to the sparrows; but the sweep of her hand was too vigorous, and the birds flew away without managing to peck.

"Katerína Sergyéevna!" — began Arkády suddenly:—"it makes no difference to you, probably; but you must know that I would not exchange you not only for your sister, but for any one in the world."

He rose and walked swiftly away, as though frightened at the words which had dropped from his tongue.

And Kátya dropped both her hands, together with the basket, on her lap, and bowing her head, gazed after Arkády. Little by little, a scarlet flush faintly tinged her cheeks; but her lips did not smile, and her dark eyes expressed surprise, and some other, as yet nameless, feeling.

"Art thou alone?"—Anna Sergyéevna's voice resounded near her.—"I thought thou hadst gone into the garden with Arkády."

Kátya, without haste, turned her eyes on her sister (elegantly, even exquisitely attired, she was standing on the path, and tickling Fifi's ears with the tip of her open parasol), and said, also without haste:—"I am alone."

"I perceive that,"—replied the other, with a laugh:—"he must have gone off to his own room."

"Yes."

"Have you been reading together?"

"Yes."

Anna Sergyéevna took Kátya by the chin and raised her face.

"You have not quarrelled, I hope?"

"No,"—said Kátya, and gently put aside her sister's hand.

"How solemnly thou answerest! I thought I should find him here, and would suggest to him that he take a stroll with me. He is always begging me to do that. Thy shoes have been brought from town; go and try them on: I noticed yesterday that those thou art now wearing are quite worn out. In general, thou dost not pay sufficient attention to that point, yet thou hast such charming little feet! And thy hands are good . . . only large; so thou must captivate with the tiny feet. But thou art not a coquette."

Anna Sergyéevna went her way along the path, her handsome gown rustling faintly; Kátya rose from the bench, and taking with her Heine, went away also—only not to try on her shoes.

"Charming little feet,"—she thought, as she walked slowly and lightly up the stone steps of

the terrace, which were red-hot with the sun;—"charming little feet, you say. . . . Well, and he shall be at them."

But she immediately felt ashamed, and ran nimbly up-stairs.

Arkády walked along the corridor to his room; the butler overtook him, and announced that Mr. Bazároff was sitting in his chamber.

"Evgény!"—muttered Arkády, almost in terror.

"He has just this moment come, and gave orders that his arrival should not be announced to Anna Sergyéevna, and bade me conduct him straight to you."

"Can a catastrophe have happened at our house?"—thought Arkády, and running hastily up-stairs to his room, he flung open the door. Bazároff's aspect instantaneously calmed him, although a more experienced eye probably would have detected in the figure of the unexpected visitor, energetic as of yore but haggard, the tokens of inward agitation. With his dusty cloak on his shoulders, and his cap on his head, he was sitting on the window-sill; he did not rise, even when Arkády flung himself upon his neck, with noisy exclamations.

"What a surprise! How does it happen!"—he kept repeating, as he bustled about the room like a man who imagines, and is trying to demonstrate, that he is delighted.—"Everything is all

right at our house, of course; they are all well, are n't they?"

"Everything at thy home is all right, but all are not well,"—said Bazároff.—"But don't jabber: order them to bring me some kvas; sit down and listen to what I will impart to thee in a few, but, I hope, fairly forcible phrases."

Arkády grew mute, and Bazároff narrated to him the story of his duel with Pável Petróvitch. Arkády was greatly amazed, and even grieved; but he did not consider it necessary to say so; he merely asked whether his uncle's wound were really not dangerous, and, on receiving the reply, —that it was extremely interesting, only not in a medical sense,—he smiled in a constrained way, and dread fell upon his heart, and he felt somewhat ashamed. Bazároff seemed to understand him.

"Yes, brother,"—he said,—"that 's what it means to live with feudal lords. Thou wilt fall into feudal ways, and take part in knightly tourneys. Well, sir, so I took myself off to 'the fathers,'"—Bazároff wound up,—"and on the way I dropped in here . . . . . in order to inform thee of all this, I would have said, if I did not regard a useless lie as a piece of stupidity. No, I dropped in here—the devil knows why. You see, it is useful for a man, once in a while, to grab himself by the topknot and pluck himself out, like a radish from a garden-bed; I performed that feat

recently. . . But I wanted to take just one more look at that from which I had parted—at that bed where I was planted."

"I hope that these words do not refer to me," —returned Arkády, with perturbation.—"I hope that thou art not thinking of parting from *me.*"

Bazároff cast an intent, almost piercing glance at him.

"Does that really pain thee so? It strikes me that *thou* hast already parted from me. Thou art so fresh and pure . . . . . thy affairs with Anna Sergyéevna must be progressing well."

"What affairs of mine with Anna Sergyéevna?"

"Why, didst not thou come hither from the town, my child? By the way, how are the Sunday-schools getting on there? Art not thou enamoured of her? Or has the time arrived for thee to be discreet?"

"Evgény, thou knowest I have always been frank with thee; I can assure thee, I swear to thee, that thou art in error."

"H'm! a new word,"—commented Bazároff. —"But there 's no need for thee to wax warm over it, for as thou seest, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me. A romanticist would have said: 'I feel that our paths are beginning to diverge,' but I simply say that we have got disgusted with each other."

"Evgény! . . ."

"My dear soul, that 's no calamity; one gets disgusted with plenty of things in this world! But now I am thinking whether it is n't time for us to say farewell? Ever since I came hither I have felt most abominably, as though I had been reading too much of Gógol's letters to the wife of the Governor of Kalúga. By the way, I did not order the horses unharnessed."

"Upon my word, this is impossible!"

"But why?"

"I am not speaking of myself; but this will be in the highest degree discourteous to Anna Sergyéevna, who is extremely anxious to see thee."

"Well, as to that, thou art mistaken."

"On the contrary, I am convinced that I am right,"—retorted Arkády.—"And why dost thou dissimulate? When it comes to that, dost thou mean to say that thou didst not come hither on her account thyself?"

"Perhaps that is correct, but thou art mistaken, nevertheless."

But Arkády was right. Anna Sergyéevna did wish to see Bazároff, and sent him an invitation, through the butler, to come to her. Bazároff changed his clothes before he went to her: it turned out that he had packed his new suit in such a way that it was at hand.

Madame Odíntzoff did not receive him in the room where he had so unexpectedly made his declaration of love, but in the drawing-room. She

graciously offered him the tips of her fingers, but her face expressed involuntary constraint.

"Anna Sergyéevna,"—Bazároff made haste to say,—"first of all, I must reassure you. You see before you a mortal who has long since recovered his senses, and who hopes that others also have forgotten his folly. I am going away for a long time, and you must admit that, although I am not a soft person, yet it would be far from a cheerful thing for me to carry away the thought that you remember me with loathing."

Anna Sergyéevna heaved a deep sigh, like a person who has just climbed to the top of a lofty mountain, and her face became enlivened with a smile. She offered her hand to Bazároff for the second time, and reciprocated his pressure.

"Let sleeping dogs lie,"—she said,—"the more so as, to speak candidly, I also sinned at that time —if not through coquetry, by something else. In a word, let us be friends as before. It was a dream, was it not? And who remembers dreams?"

"Who remembers them? And, moreover, love . . . is an imaginary feeling, you know."

"Really? I am very glad to hear it."

Thus did Anna Sergyéevna express herself, and thus did Bazároff express himself; they both thought that they were speaking the truth. Did their words contain the truth, the whole truth? They themselves did not know, much less does the

author. But they entered upon the sort of conversation which seemed to indicate that they thoroughly believed each other.

Anna Sergyéevna asked Bazároff, among other things, what he had been doing at the Kirsánoffs'. He came near telling her about his duel with Pável Petróvitch, but restrained himself at the reflection that she might imagine that he was trying to make himself interesting, and answered her that he had been working all that time.

"And I,"—said Anna Sergyéevna,—"first moped—God knows why; I even prepared to go abroad; just fancy! . . . . Then it passed off, your friend Arkády Nikoláitch arrived, and I fell back into my rut, into my genuine rôle."

"Into what rôle, permit me to inquire?"

"The rôle of aunt, preceptress, mother, whatever you please to call it. By the way, do you know, that formerly I did not quite understand your intimate friendship with Arkády Nikoláitch! I considered him decidedly insignificant. But now I have come to know him better, and have convinced myself that he is clever. . . And the chief point, he is young, young . . . . not like you and me, Evgény Vasílitch."

"Is he still as timid as ever in your presence?" inquired Bazároff.

"But is it possible . . . . ." began Anna Sergyéevna, and, after reflecting a little, she added: —"Now he has become more confiding, he talks

with me. Formerly he avoided me. However, I did not seek his society. He and Kátya are great friends."

Bazároff felt vexed.—"It is impossible for a woman not to be crafty!"—he thought. "You say that he avoided you,"—he articulated, with a cold sneer,—"but, probably, it was no secret to you that he was in love with you?"

"What? He too?"—broke from Anna Sergyéevna.

"He too,"—repeated Bazároff, with a submissive bow.—"Is it possible that you did not know it, and that I have been telling you news?"

Anna Sergyéevna dropped her eyes.—"You are in error, Evgény Vasílitch."

"I think not. But perhaps I ought not to allude to that.—And don't you be sly henceforth," he added to himself.

"Why should not you allude to it? But I think that you are ascribing too much importance to a momentary impression. I begin to suspect that you are inclined to exaggeration."

"It is better for us not to talk about that, Anna Sergyéevna."

"Why?"—she retorted, but she herself turned the conversation on another subject. Nevertheless, she felt awkward with Bazároff, although she had told him, and had assured herself, that everything was forgotten. As she exchanged simple phrases with him, she felt the slight con-

straint of terror. Thus do people on a steamer, at sea, chat and laugh, care-free, exactly as though they were on solid land; but let the slightest halt take place, let the smallest sign of anything unusual present itself, and instantly there starts forth upon all countenances an expression of peculiar alarm, which bears witness to the constant consciousness of danger.

Anna Sergyéevna's conversation with Bazároff did not last long. She began to grow thoughtful, to return abstracted replies, and, at last, proposed to him that they should go into the hall, where they found the Princess and Kátya. "But where is Arkády Nikoláevitch?"—inquired the hostess; and on learning that he had not shown himself for more than an hour past, she sent for him. He was not soon found: he had ensconced himself in the very depths of the garden, and with his chin propped upon his clasped hands, he was sitting absorbed in thought. His thoughts were profound and important, but not sad. He knew that Anna Sergyéevna was sitting alone with Bazároff, and he felt no jealousy, as formerly; on the contrary, his face beamed gently; he seemed to be surprised at something, and to be rejoicing, and making up his mind to something.

XXVI

The deceased Mr. Odíntzoff had not liked novelties, but he had permitted "a certain play of ennobled taste," and, in consequence thereof, he had erected in his garden, between the hot-house and the pond, a building in the nature of a Greek portico of Russian brick. In the rear, blind wall of this portico, or gallery, six niches had been let in for statues, which Odíntzoff had intended to import from Italy. These statues were intended to represent Solitude, Silence, Meditation, Melancholy, Modesty, and Sentiment. One of them, the Goddess of Silence, with her finger on her lips, had been brought and set in place; but that very same day the naughty little boys of the house-serfs had broken off her nose, and although a neighbouring plasterer had undertaken to attach a nose to her "twice as good as the former," Odíntzoff had ordered her to be taken away, and she was placed in a corner of the threshing-shed, where she stood for long years, arousing the superstitious fears of the peasant women. The front side of the portico had long since become overgrown with thick brushwood; only the capitals of the columns were visible above the dense verdure. In the portico itself, even at noonday,

it was cool. Anna Sergyéevna had not been fond of visiting this spot since she had seen an adder there, but Kátya often came to sit on a big stone bench which had been constructed beneath one of the niches. Surrounded by coolness and shade, she read, worked, or surrendered herself to that sensation of complete tranquillity which is probably known to every one, and whose charm consists in a barely-conscious, mute contemplation of the broad stream of life, which incessantly rolls both around us and in us.

On the day following Bazároff's arrival, Kátya was sitting on her favourite bench, and beside her again sat Arkády. He had begged her to come with him to the " portico."

About an hour remained before breakfast-time; the dewy morning had already changed into a hot day. Arkády's countenance preserved its expression of the day before; Kátya wore a troubled aspect. Her sister, immediately after tea, had called her to her in her boudoir, and having first caressed her, which always rather terrified Kátya, she had advised her to be cautious in her behaviour toward Arkády, and, in particular, to shun solitary conversations with him, which, it seemed, had been commented upon by her aunt, and by all the household. In addition to this, on the previous evening, Anna Sergyéevna had been out of sorts; and Kátya herself had felt agitated, as though she recognised that she had done wrong. In yield-

ing to Arkády's plea, she had told herself that it was for the last time.

"Katerína Sergyéevna,"—he began, with a certain bashful ease,—"since I have had the happiness of living in your house, I have talked over many things with you, and yet there is one . . . . . question . . . . which is very important for me that I have not yet touched upon. You remarked yesterday that I have been made over here,"—he added, both seeking and avoiding Kátya's gaze, fixed questioningly upon him.—"As a matter of fact, I have undergone a change in many respects, and you know that better than any one else,—you, to whom, in reality, I am indebted for this change."

"I? . . . To me? . . . ." said Kátya.

"Now I am no longer that arrogant boy that I was when I came hither,"—pursued Arkády;—"not in vain have I passed my twenty-third year; as before, I desire to be of use, I desire to consecrate all my powers to the truth; but I no longer seek my ideals where I formerly sought them; they present themselves to me . . . much closer at hand. Hitherto, I have not understood myself; I have set myself tasks that were beyond my strength. . . . . My eyes have recently been opened, thanks to a certain feeling. . . . I do not express myself quite clearly, but I hope you understand me. . . . ."

Kátya made no reply, but ceased to look at Arkády.

"I assume,"—he went on again, in a more agitated voice, and a chaffinch above his head, in the foliage of a birch-tree, unconcernedly carolled his song,—"I assume that it is the duty of every honest man to be perfectly frank with those . . . . those persons who . . . . in a word, with the persons who are near to his heart, and, therefore, I . . . . I intend . . . ."

But here Arkády's eloquence failed him; he became confused, stammered, and was forced to pause for a while; still Kátya did not raise her eyes. Apparently, she did not understand what all this was leading up to, and was waiting for something.

"I foresee that I shall surprise you,"—began Arkády, collecting his forces afresh,—"the more so as this feeling relates, in a certain way . . . in a certain way, observe,—to you. I remember that you reproached me yesterday with a lack of seriousness,"—went on Arkády, with the aspect of a man who has walked into a morass, feels that with every step he is sinking deeper and deeper, and, nevertheless, strides onward, in the hope of traversing it as speedily as possible:—"that reproach is often directed . . . . falls . . . on young people, even when they have ceased to merit it; and if I had more self-confidence . . . . ."

("Come, help me, help me!" thought Arkády, in

despair, but Kátya, as before, did not turn her head.) —" If I could hope . . . ."

" If I could feel convinced of what you say,"— rang out Anna Sergyéevna's clear voice at that moment.

Arkády instantly became dumb, and Kátya turned pale. A path ran past the bushes which screened the portico. Anna Sergyéevna was walking along it, in company with Bazároff. Kátya and Arkády could not see them, but they heard every word, the rustling of her gown, her very breath. They advanced a few paces and halted, as though with deliberate intent, directly in front of the portico.

" You see,"—pursued Anna Sergyéevna,— " you and I have made a mistake; neither of us is in his first youth, especially I; we have lived, we are weary; why should we both stand on ceremony?—we are clever: at first, we interested each other, our curiosity was aroused . . . . . and then . . . . ."

" And then I grew insipid,"—put in Bazároff.

" You know that that was not the cause of our falling out. But, at any rate, we did not need each other; that is the principal point: there was too much in us that was . . . . how shall I express it? . . . identical. We did not comprehend that at first. On the contrary, Arkády . . . ."

" Do you need him? "—inquired Bazároff.

" That will do, Evgény Vasílievitch. You say

that he is not indifferent to me, and it always has seemed to me that he liked me. I know that I am fit to be his aunt, but I will not conceal from you that I have begun to think more frequently of him. There is a certain charm in that young, fresh feeling. . . . ."

"The word *fascination* is more used in such cases,"—interposed Bazároff; seething bitterness was audible in his calm, but dull voice.—"Arkády seemed to be mysterious with me yesterday; he did not mention either you or your sister. . . That is an important symptom."

"He is exactly like a brother with Kátya,"—said Anna Sergyéevna,—"and I like that in him, although possibly I ought not to allow such intimacy between them."

"Is that the . . . . sister . . . speaking in you?"—articulated Bazároff slowly.

"Of course; . . . . but why are we standing here? Let us go on. What a strange conversation between us, is it not? And could I have anticipated that I should talk thus with you? You know that I am afraid of you, ... and, at the same time, I trust you because, in reality, you are very kind."

"In the first place, I am not kind in the least; and, in the second place, I have lost all significance for you, and you tell me that I am kind. . . . . That is exactly the same as placing a wreath of flowers on the head of a corpse."

"Evgény Vasílitch, we cannot control . . . ." began Anna Sergyéevna; but a breeze swept by, rustled the leaves, and carried away her words.

"Assuredly, you are free,"—enunciated Bazároff, after a brief pause. It was impossible to make out any more; the footsteps died away . . . all became silent.

Arkády turned to Kátya. She was sitting in the same attitude, only she had bowed her head still lower than before.

"Katerína Sergyéevna,"—he said, with a trembling voice, and with tightly clasped hands:—"I love you forever and irrevocably, and I love no one but you. I wanted to say this, to learn your opinion and to ask your hand, because I am not rich, and I feel that I am prepared for all sacrifices. . . You do not answer? You do not believe me? You think that I am speaking idly? But remember these last few days! Is it possible that you have not long ago convinced yourself, everything else—understand me—everything, everything else long ago vanished without a trace? Look at me, say one word to me. . I love . . . . I love you . . . believe me!"

Kátya looked at Arkády with a solemn, beaming gaze, and after long meditation, hardly smiling, she said:—"Yes."

Arkády sprang from the bench.—"Yes! You said 'yes,' Katerína Sergyéevna! What does that word mean? Does it mean 'I love you,' or that

you believe me? . . . Or . . . . or . . . . I dare not finish . . . ."

" Yes,"—repeated Kátya, and this time he understood her. He seized her large, beautiful hands, and panting with rapture, pressed them to his heart. He could hardly stand on his feet, and merely kept repeating: " Kátya, Kátya . . . ." and she fell to weeping, in an innocent sort of way, laughing gently at her own tears. He who has not beheld such tears in the eyes of the beloved being has not yet experienced to what a degree, all swooning with gratitude and with shame, a man can be happy on this earth.

On the following day, early in the morning, Anna Sergyéevna ordered Bazároff to be summoned to her boudoir, and, with a forced laugh, she handed him a folded sheet of note-paper. It was a letter from Arkády: in it he asked the hand of her sister.

Bazároff swiftly glanced over the letter, and exerted an effort over himself not to display the impetuous feeling which instantly flamed up in his soul.

" So that 's how it is,"—he said;—" and you, I believe, no longer ago than yesterday, supposed that he loved Katerína Sergyéevna with the love of a brother. What do you mean to do now? "

" What do *you* advise me to do? "—asked Anna Sergyéevna, continuing to laugh.

" Why, I think,"—replied Bazároff, also with

a laugh, although he did not feel at all merry, and did not, in the least, wish to laugh, any more than she did:—"I think you will have to give the young people your blessing. It is a fine match, in every respect; Kirsánoff has a respectable property, he is his father's only son, and the father is a fine fellow also, I will not deny it."

Madame Odíntzoff paced the room. Her face flushed and paled by turns.

"You think so?"—she said. "Why not? I see no obstacle. . . . I am glad for Kátya . . . and for Arkády Nikoláevitch. Of course I shall await his father's reply. I will send him himself to him. But, you see, it turns out that I was right yesterday when I told you that we were both old folks. . . . How is it that I did not see this? It amazes me!"

Again Anna Sergyéevna began to laugh, and immediately turned away.

"The young people of the present day have become very sly,"—remarked Bazároff, and began to laugh also.—"Good-bye,"—he said again, after a brief pause.—"I hope you will finish this affair in the most agreeable manner; and I shall rejoice from afar."

Madame Odíntzoff turned swiftly toward him.

"You are not going away? Why should you not remain *now?* Remain . . . . it is jolly to talk with you . . . . just like walking on the brink of a precipice: at first one feels timid, but

afterward one gets courage from somewhere or other. Remain."

"Thanks for your suggestion, Anna Sergyéevna, and for your flattering opinion of my conversational talents. But I think that I have been already revolving too long as it is, in a sphere which is foreign to me. Flying fish are able to maintain themselves for quite a while in the air, but they are bound soon to splash back into the water; permit me also to paddle in my own element."

Madame Odíntzoff looked at Bazároff. A bitter sneer contorted his pale face. "That man loved me!" she thought—and she felt sorry for him, and offered him her hand with sympathy.

But he understood her.—"No!"—he said, and retreated a pace.—"I am a poor man, but up to this time I have not accepted alms. Farewell, madame, and may good health be yours."

"I am convinced that this is not our last meeting,"—articulated Anna Sergyéevna, with an involuntary movement.

"All sorts of things happen in this world!"—replied Bazároff, bowed, and left the room.

"So thou hast taken it into thy head to build a nest?"—he said that same day to Arkády, as, squatting on his heels, he packed his trunk.—"Why not? It is a good move. I expected a wholly different direction from thee. Or, perchance, this has stunned thee thyself?"

"I really did not expect it when I parted from thee,"—replied Arkády. "But why dost thou thyself quibble and say: 'It is a good move,' as though I were not aware of thine opinion as to matrimony?"

"Ekh, my dear friend,"—said Bazároff:—"what a way thou hast of expressing thyself! Thou seest what I am doing: there turns out to be an empty space in my trunk, and I stuff in hay; so it is with our trunk of life; it must be filled with anything that comes to hand, so that there may be no empty space. Please do not take offence: thou probably recallest what opinion I have always held of Katerína Sergyéevna. Some young ladies bear the reputation of being clever because they sigh cleverly; but thy young lady can stand up for herself, and stand up in such wise, to boot, that she will manage thee,—well, and that is as it should be."

He banged down the lid and rose from the floor. —"And now I repeat to thee in farewell because there is no use in deceiving ourselves: we are parting forever, and thou feelest that thyself . . . thou hast acted wisely; thou wert not created for our bitter, harsh, wretched life. There is in thee neither insolence nor malice, but there is youthful audacity and youthful arrogance; that is not suited to our cause. A man of your sort, a nobleman, cannot go any further than noble submission or noble effervescence, and that is stuff and non-

sense. You, for example, do not fight,—and yet you imagine that you are a dashing fellow,—while we want to fight. And what is the state of the case? Our dust eats thine eyes out, our mud bespatters thee, but thou hast not grown up to our stature; thou involuntarily admirest thyself; it is pleasant for thee to scold thyself; but we find that tiresome—serve us up others! we must break others! Thou art a splendid young fellow; but, nevertheless, thou art a soft, liberal young gentleman,—*et volátout,* as my parent expresses himself."

"Thou art bidding me an eternal farewell, Evgény?"—said Arkády sadly. "And hast thou no other words for me?"

Bazároff scratched the nape of his neck.—"I have, Arkády, I have other words, only I shall not utter them, because that is romanticism,—that means: making one's self too—sypuppy. But do thou marry as promptly as possible, and establish thy nest, and beget as many children as thou canst. They will be clever creatures, simply because they will be born in a different age from what thou and I were. Ehe! I see that the horses are ready. It is time to go! I have said goodbye to everybody. . . . . Well, how now? shall we embrace?"

Arkády flung himself on the neck of his former preceptor and friend, and the tears fairly streamed from his eyes.

"That 's what it is to be young!"—ejaculated Bazároff calmly.—"But I place my hopes on Katerína Sergyéevna. Just see how quickly she will comfort thee!"

"Farewell, brother!"—he said to Arkády, when he had clambered into the peasant cart; and pointing to a pair of jackdaws, which were sitting on the roof of the stable, he added:—"Look yonder!—study them!"

"What does that mean?"—asked Arkády.

"What? Art thou so weak in natural history, or hast thou forgotten, that the daw is the most respectable, domestic of birds? An example for thee!—Good-bye, señor!"

The cart rattled and rolled away.

Bazároff had spoken the truth. As he chatted with Kátya that evening he had totally forgotten his tutor. He had already begun to come under her sway, and Kátya was conscious of it, and was not surprised. He was obliged to go to Márino, to Nikolái Petróvitch, on the following day. Anna Sergyéevna did not wish to embarrass the young people, and only out of decorum did not leave them too long alone together. She magnanimously banished from them the Princess, who had been reduced to a state of tearful wrath by the news of the impending marriage. At first Anna Sergyéevna feared lest the spectacle of their happiness should seem somewhat oppressive to her; but it turned out to be exactly the reverse:

that spectacle not only did not oppress her, it interested her, it touched her at last. Anna Sergyéevna was delighted yet saddened by this. "Evidently, Bazároff is right,"—she thought: "curiosity, mere curiosity, and love of a quiet life, and egotism. . . . ."

"Children,"—she said aloud,—"is love an imaginary feeling?"

But neither Kátya nor Arkády even understood her. They shunned her; they could not get the conversation which they had involuntarily overheard out of their minds. However, Anna Sergyéevna speedily reassured them; and that was not difficult: she had reassured herself.

XXVII

The old Bazároffs were all the more delighted at their son's unexpected return, in proportion as they had the least expected it. Arína Vlásievna was perturbed to such a degree, and so exhausted herself by running all over the house, that Vasíly Iványitch compared her to a "mother partridge": the bobtail of her short, loose, morning gown really did give her a somewhat bird-like air. And he himself merely bellowed and bit the amber mouthpiece of his tchubúk sideways, and grasping his neck with his hands, twisted his head, as though he were trying to find out whether it were well screwed on, then suddenly opened his wide mouth to its full extent, and laughed heartily but absolutely without sound.

"I have come to you for six whole weeks, old man,"—Bazároff said to him:—"I want to work, so please don't bother me."

"Thou wilt forget my physiognomy, that 's the way I shall bother thee!"—replied Vasíly Ivánovitch."

He kept his promise. Having installed his son, as before, in his study, he devoted himself to hiding from him, and restrained his wife from all

superfluous manifestations of tenderness. "My dear woman,"—he said to her, "during Eniúshka's first visit we bored him a bit; now we must be more sensible." Arína Vlásievna agreed with her husband, but gained little by so doing, because she saw her son only at meals, and became definitively afraid to speak to him. "Eniúshenka!"—she would say to him,—and before he could glance round she would be tugging at the cords of her reticule, and stammering: "Never mind, never mind, I did n't mean anything," and then she would betake herself to Vasíly Ivánovitch and say to him, propping her cheek on her hand: "I should like to find out, my darling, what Eniúsha wants to-day for dinner, cabbage-soup or beet-soup?"

"But why dost not thou ask him thyself?"—"But I shall bore him!" However, Bazároff soon ceased to lock himself up: the fever of work *leaped away* from him, and was replaced by dejected boredom and dull disquiet. A strange languor was perceptible in all his movements; even his walk, firm and impetuously bold, underwent a change. He ceased to take solitary strolls and began to seek society; he drank tea in the drawing-room, prowled about the vegetable-garden with Vasíly Ivánovitch, and smoked with him "dumb as a fish." One day he inquired of his father concerning Father Alexyéi. At first, Vasíly Ivánovitch rejoiced at this change, but his

joy was not of long duration. "Eniúsha distresses me," he complained quietly to his wife; "he is not exactly dissatisfied or angry, that would not matter; he is embittered, he is melancholy,—that is the terrible thing. He persistently maintains silence, as though he were reproaching thee and me; he is getting thin, his complexion has a bad colour."—"O Lord, O Lord!" whispered the old woman; "I would like to put an amulet on his neck, but of course he would not let me." Vasíly Ivánovitch himself made several attempts to question Bazároff about his work, about his health, about Arkády. . . . . But Bazároff answered him unwillingly and carelessly, and one day, noticing that his father, in conversation, was making stealthy approaches toward something, he said to him with vexation: "Why art thou constantly, as it were, walking round me on tiptoe? That manner is worse than thy former one!"

"Well, well, well, I did n't mean anything!" hastily replied poor Vasíly Ivánovitch. His political hints remained equally fruitless. In beginning, one day, a conversation in connection with the impending emancipation of the serfs, about progress, he hoped to arouse the sympathy of his son; but the latter said indifferently: "Yesterday, as I was walking past a hedge, I heard the little peasant boys of this locality shouting, in place of some ancient ballad: '*The loyal time*

is coming, the heart feeleth love'—there 's progress for thee."

Sometimes Bazároff betook himself to the village, and, banteringly, as was his wont, entered into conversation with some peasant man or other. "Come," he said to him, "expound to me your views of life, brother; for in you, they say, lies the whole force and future of Russia, with you a new epoch in history will begin,—you will give us both a genuine language and laws." The peasant either made no reply or uttered some words to the following effect: "And we can . . . too, because, you know . . . . what limits are appointed to us, for example."

"Do thou just explain to me what thy world is,"—Bazároff interrupted him. "And is it that same world which stands on three fishes?"

"The earth does stand on three fishes,"—explained the serf soothingly, in a patriarchally-good-humoured singsong,—"but against our commune [1] there is, as every one knows, the will of the master; because you are our fathers. And the more strict is the lord of the manor in his demands, the pleasanter it is for the peasant."

One day, after listening to a speech of this sort, Bazároff shrugged his shoulders scornfully and turned aside, and the peasant went his way.

"What wert thou talking about?"—another peasant asked him—a middle-aged man, with a

[1] *Mir*, world; *Mir*, commune.—Translator.

surly countenance, from the threshold of his cottage, who had witnessed from afar this conversation with Bazároff.—"About the arrears of taxes?"

"About the arrears of taxes, forsooth, my good fellow!"—replied the first peasant, and in his voice there was no longer a trace of the patriarchal singsong, but, on the contrary, a certain careless moroseness was audible.—"We just chattered a bit; his tongue was itching to talk. Everybody knows how it is—he 's a gentleman; can he understand anything?"

"How should he understand!"—replied the other peasant, and shaking their caps and tucking in their belts, the two set to discussing their own affairs and needs. Alas! Bazároff, who had shrugged his shoulders, and knew how to talk to the peasants (as he had boasted, in the course of his quarrel with Pável Petróvitch), that self-confident Bazároff did not even suspect that he was, in their eyes, something in the nature of a born fool. . . .

However, at last he found an occupation for himself. One day, in his presence, Vasíly Ivánitch was binding up a peasant's injured leg, but the old man's hands trembled and he could not manage the bandages; his son helped, and from that time forth he began to take part in his practice, without ceasing, at the same time, to jeer, both at the remedies which he himself had recom-

mended, and at his father, who immediately made use of them. But Bazároff's sneers did not in the least discomfit Vasíly Ivánovitch; rather did they comfort him. Clasping his soiled dressing-gown to his belly with two fingers, and smoking his pipe, he listened with delight to Bazároff, and the more ill-temper there was in his sallies, the more good-naturedly did his enraptured father laugh, displaying all his black teeth, to the very last one. He even frequently repeated these stupid or senseless sallies, and, for example, for a space of several days he would keep repeating, without rhyme or reason: "Well, that 's of no consequence!" [1] simply because his son, on learning that he was accustomed to go to Matins, had employed that expression.—"Thank God! he has ceased to have the blue devils!" he whispered to his wife; "the way he snubbed me to-day,—it was wonderful!" On the other hand, the thought that he possessed such an assistant inspired him with enthusiasm, filled him with pride. "Yes, yes," he said to a peasant woman, in a man's coat, and a head-dress like a pointed coronet, with horns, as he handed her a phial of Gulyard water, or a pot of white ointment, "my good soul, thou shouldst thank God every minute that my son is visiting me: thou art being doctored now after the most scientific and the newest method, dost thou under-

[1] In Russian rather slangily expressed: "That 's the ninth affair!"—TRANSLATOR.

stand that? Even the Emperor of the French, Napoleon, has no better doctor." And the woman who had come to complain that she "had got the gripes" (but she was not herself able to explain what she meant by these words) merely made a reverence, and thrust her hand into her bosom, where lay four eggs wrapped up in the end of a towel.

Bazároff once even extracted a tooth for a passing pedlar of dress goods, and although that tooth was of the most ordinary sort, nevertheless Vasíly Ivánovitch preserved it as a rarity, and exhibited it to Father Alexyéi, repeating incessantly:

"Just look, what roots! Such strength as Evgény has! He fairly lifted that dry-goods pedlar into the air. . . It seems to me that even an oak-tree would have flown out! . . . ."

"It is laudable!"—said Father Alexyéi at last, not knowing what reply to make, and how to rid himself of the old man, who had gone into ecstasies.

One day a wretched peasant from a neighbouring village brought to Vasíly Ivánovitch his brother, who was ill with typhus fever. Lying prone upon a truss of straw, the unfortunate man was dying; dark spots covered his body; he had even lost consciousness. Vasíly Ivánovitch expressed his regret that it had not occurred to some one earlier to have recourse to the aid of medicine, and

announced that there was no hope. As a matter of fact, the peasant did not get his brother home alive; the man died in the cart.

Three days later Bazároff entered his father's room, and inquired whether he had not lunar caustic?

"I have; what dost thou need it for?"

"I need it . . . to cauterise a wound."

"Whose?"

"My own."

"What, thine own! Why? What wound is it? Where is it?"

"Here on my finger. To-day I went to the village, thou knowest, the one whence they brought that peasant with the typhus. For some reason, they were preparing to open him, and I had had no practice in that for a long time."

"Well?"

"Well, and so I asked leave of the district physician, and cut myself."

Vasíly Ivánovitch turned pale all over, and without uttering a word, he flew to his cupboard, whence he immediately returned with a piece of lunar caustic in his hand. Bazároff was about to take it and depart.

"For God's sake,"—said Vasíly Ivánovitch:—"let me do it myself."

Bazároff grinned.—"How anxious thou art for practice!"

"Don't jest, please. Show me thy finger. The wound is not large. Does n't it hurt?"

"Press on harder, don't be afraid."

Vasíly Iványovitch paused.—"What dost thou think, Evgény, would n't it be better for us to cauterise it with a hot iron?"

"That ought to have been done sooner, but now, in reality, even the lunar caustic is of no use. If I have been infected, it is too late anyway."

"How . . . . . too late? . . . . ." Vasíly Iványovitch could hardly articulate.

"I should think so! More than four hours have elapsed since then."

Vasíly Iványovitch cauterised the wound a little longer.—"And had not the district doctor any lunar caustic?"

"No."

"How came that, my God! A physician—and he has not such an indispensable thing!"

"Thou shouldst see his lancets,"—said Bazároff, and left the room.

Until evening, and during the whole course of the following day, Vasíly Iványovitch caught at every possible pretext to enter his son's room, and, although he not only did not mention his wound, but even endeavoured to talk about the most irrelevant subjects, still he peered so persistently into his eyes and watched him in so perturbed a manner, that Bazároff lost patience, and threatened to leave the house. Vasíly Iványovitch gave him his word not to worry, the more so, as Arína Vlásievna, from whom, of course, he had concealed everything, was beginning to besiege him with

questions as to why he did not sleep, and what had happened to him? For two whole days he persevered, although he did not greatly like the looks of his son, whom he still watched by stealth, ... but on the third day at dinner he could endure it no longer. Bazároff sat with bowed head, and did not touch a single viand.

"Why dost thou not eat, Evgény?"—he asked, imparting to his face the most care-free of expressions.—"The food is well cooked, I think."

"I don't feel like it, so I don't eat."

"Hast thou no appetite? And how is thy head?"—he added, in a timid voice:—"does it ache?"

"Yes. Why should n't it ache?"

Arína Vlásievna straightened up, and pricked up her ears.

"Don't be angry, please, Evgény,"—went on Vasíly Ivánovitch,—"but wilt not thou allow me to feel thy pulse?"

Bazároff rose to his feet.—"I can tell thee, without feeling my pulse, that I have fever."

"And hast thou had a chill?"

"I have. I will go and lie down; and do you send me some linden tea. I must have caught cold."

"That explains why I heard thee coughing last night,"—said Arína Vlásievna.

"I have taken cold,"– repeated Bazároff, and left the room.

Arína Vlásievna busied herself with preparing the tea from linden flowers, but Vasíly Ivánovitch went into the adjoining room and silently tore his hair.

Bazároff did not get up again that day, and spent the whole night in a heavy, half-conscious doze. About one o'clock in the morning, opening his eyes with an effort, he beheld above him, by the dim light of the shrine-lamp, the pale face of his father, and ordered him to go away; the latter obeyed, but immediately returned on tiptoe, and half screening himself with the cupboard door, he gazed at his son, never once removing his eyes. Arína Vlásievna also had not gone to bed, and opening the door of the study a mere crack, she kept approaching to listen "how Eniúsha was breathing," and to look at Vasíly Ivánovitch. She could see nothing but his motionless, bowed back, but even that afforded her some solace. In the morning, Bazároff tried to rise; he went to bed again. Vasíly Ivánovitch waited upon him in silence; Arína Vlásievna came to him, and asked him how he felt. He replied: "Better," and turned his face to the wall. Vasíly Ivánovitch waved his wife off with both hands; she bit her lip, in order to keep from crying, and left the room. Everything about the house seemed suddenly to have grown dark; all faces lengthened, a strange stillness reigned; a loud-voiced cock was carried off from the court-yard to the village, and

for a long time could not understand why he was treated in that way. Bazároff continued to lie, nestled up to the wall. Vasíly Iványovitch tried to put various questions to him, but they wearied Bazároff, and the old man subsided into silence in his arm-chair, only now and then cracking his fingers. He went out into the garden for a few moments, stood there like a statue, as though overwhelmed with inexpressible amazement (in general the expression of amazement never left his face), and returned again to his son, striving to avoid interrogations from his wife. At last, she seized him by the arm, and convulsively, almost menacingly, she said: "But what ails him?" Then he regained his composure, and forced himself to smile at her in reply; but, to his own horror, instead of a smile, he evoked a laugh from somewhere within him. He had sent for the doctor at daybreak. He considered it necessary to inform his son of this, so that the latter might not wax angry.

Bazároff suddenly turned over on the couch, stared dully and intently at his father, and asked for a drink.

Vasíly Iványovitch gave him water, and seized the opportunity to feel his forehead.

"Old man,"—began Bazároff in a hoarse, slow voice,—"this is a bad business of mine. I am poisoned, and thou wilt bury me a few days hence."

Vasíly Ivánovitch reeled, as though some one had struck him a blow on the legs.

"Evgény!"—he stammered,—"what is it thou art saying! God be with thee! Thou hast caught cold. . . ."

"Stop,"—Bazároff interrupted him without haste.—"It is not permissible for a physician to talk like that. All the signs of infection exist, thou knowest it thyself."

"Where are the signs . . . . of infection, Evgény? . . . Gracious heavens!"

"And how about this?"—said Bazároff, and stripping up the sleeve of his shirt, he showed his father the ill-omened red spots breaking out.

Vasíly Ivánovitch shuddered, and turned cold with terror.—"Let us assume,"—he said at last, —"let us assume . . . if . . . even if there is something in the nature of . . . . . infection . . . ."

"Of pyemia,"—prompted his son.

"Well, yes . . . in the nature of . . . . . an epidemic . . . ."

"Of *pyemia,*"—repeated Bazároff gruffly and distinctly:—"can it be that thou hast already forgotten thy text-books?"

"Well, yes, yes, as thou wilt. . . . Nevertheless, we will cure thee. . ."

"Come, that 's humbug. But that is not the point. I did not expect that I should die so soon; that is a very disagreeable accident, to speak the

truth. Both thou and mother must now profit by the fact that religion is strong in you; here 's your chance to put it to the proof."—He took another sip of water.—" But I should like to make one request of thee . . . while my head is still under my command. To-morrow, or the day after to-morrow, as thou art aware, my brain will resign from duty. Even now I am not quite certain whether I am expressing myself clearly. While I have been lying here it has seemed to me all the while as though red dogs were running around me, and that thou wert making a point over me, as over a woodcock. It is exactly as though I were drunk. Dost thou understand me well? "

" Goodness, Evgény, thou art talking in precisely the proper way."

" So much the better; thou hast told me that thou hast sent for the doctor. . . Thou hast comforted thyself thereby; . . . . comfort me also: send a special messenger . . . . ."

" To Arkády Nikoláitch? "—interpolated the old man.

" Who is Arkády Nikoláitch? "—said Bazároff, as though in doubt. . . . " Akh, yes! that fledgling! No, don't touch him; he has become a full-grown bird now. Do not be surprised; this is not delirium. But do thou send a messenger to Anna Sergyéevna Odíntzoff; there is a landed proprietress of that name yonder. . . Knowest thou? " (Vasíly Ivánovitch nodded.) " Say that

Evgény Bazároff gave orders to present his compliments, and order the man to say that he is dying. Wilt thou fulfil this?"

"I will. Only, can it be possible that thou shouldst die, Evgény? . . . Judge for thyself! Where would be the justice after that?"

"I don't know; only send the messenger."

"I will send him this very minute, and will write a letter myself."

"No, why shouldst thou? Say that I gave orders that my compliments were to be presented; nothing more is necessary. And now I will go back to my dogs. It is strange! I try to fix my thoughts on death, and it comes to nothing. I see some sort of a spot . . . . and that is all."

Once more he turned painfully toward the wall; but Vasíly Ivánovitch left the study, and when he reached his wife's bed-chamber, he fairly tumbled down on his knees before the holy pictures.

"Pray, Arína, pray?"—he moaned:—"our son is dying."

The doctor—that same district doctor who had no lunar caustic—arrived, and, after examining the patient, advised them to adopt a waiting policy, and added a few words as to the possibility of recovery.

"But did you ever happen to see people in my situation *fail* to betake themselves to the Elysian Fields?"—inquired Bazároff, and, suddenly

grasping the leg of a heavy table, which stood near the divan, he shook the table and moved it from its place.

"The strength, the strength is all there still," —he said,—"but I must die! . . . . An old man has, at least, succeeded in weaning himself from life, while I . . . . But come, just try to contradict death. It contradicts thee, and that ends the matter! Who is weeping there?"—he added, after a brief pause.—"Mother? Poor thing! Whom will she feed now with her wonderful beet-soup? And thou also, Vasíly Iványitch, I believe thou art whimpering too? Well, if Christianity does not help, be a philosopher, a stoic! I believe thou wert boasting of being a philosopher?"

"Much of a philosopher I am!" roared Vasíly Ivánovitch, and the tears fairly dripped down his cheeks.

Bazároff grew worse with every passing hour; the malady took a swift course, which usually happens in cases of surgical poisoning. He had not, as yet, lost consciousness, and understood what was said to him; he still struggled. "I will not be delirious,"—he whispered, clenching his fists; —"what nonsense!" And immediately he said: "Well, and if from eight you subtract ten, how many will remain?"—Vasíly Ivánovitch walked about like a crazy person, suggested now one remedy, now another, and did nothing but keep covering his son's feet. "He must be wrapped up

in cold sheets . . . nausea . . . . mustard plasters on his stomach . . . . blood-letting,"—he said, with an effort. The doctor, whom he had implored to remain, humoured him, gave the patient lemonade, and for himself asked now a pipe, now "something strengthening and warming," that is to say, vodka. Arína Vlásievna sat on a low bench near the door, and only now and then went away to pray; a few days previously her toilet mirror had slipped out of her hands and been broken, and she had always regarded this as a bad sign; even Anfísushka was not able to say anything comforting to her. Timoféitch had gone to Madame Odíntzoff.

The night was bad for Bazároff. . . . He was tortured by a violent fever. Toward morning he was resting more easily. He asked that Arína Vlásievna might brush his hair, kissed her hand, and drank a couple of mouthfuls of tea. Vasíly Ivánovitch revived somewhat.

"Thank God!"—he kept repeating;—"the crisis has come . . . . the crisis has come!"

"Eka, what art thou thinking of?"—said Bazároff:—"what does that word signify? He has hit upon it; he has said, 'the crisis,' and is comforted. It is astounding how a man still has faith in words. If people call him a fool, for example, and yet do not beat him, he grows melancholy; if they call him a clever fellow, and yet give him no money,—he feels satisfaction."

This little speech of Bazároff's, which recalled his former "sallies," touched Vasíly Iványovitch.

"Bravo! Splendidly said, splendidly!"—he exclaimed, pretending to clap his hands.

Bazároff laughed sadly.

"Well then, according to thy opinion,"—he said,—"is the crisis past, or is it beginning?"

"Thou art better, that is what I see, that is what delights me,"—replied Vasíly Iványovitch.

"Well, very good; it is never a bad thing to rejoice. And hast thou sent to her? thou rememberest?"

"Yes, of course."

The change for the better did not last long. The assaults of the malady were renewed. Vasíly Iványovitch sat by Bazároff's side. It seemed as though some special anguish were torturing the old man. Several times he was on the point of speaking—and could not.

"Evgény!"—he blurted out at last:—"my son, my dear, precious son."

This unusual appeal took effect upon Bazároff. . . . . He turned his head a little, and, evidently striving to escape from beneath the burden of oblivion which was weighing him down, he articulated:—"What, my father?"

"Evgény,"—went on Vasíly Iványovitch, and sank down on his knees beside Bazároff, although the latter did not open his eyes, and did not see him.—"Evgény, thou art better now; God grant

that thou mayest recover; but take advantage of this time, comfort thy mother and me, fulfil thy Christian duty! It is terrible for me to say this to thee; but it is still more terrible . . . forever, thou knowest, Evgény . . . reflect, what . . . . ."

The old man's voice broke, and a strange expression crept across the face of his son, although he continued to lie with closed eyes.—" I do not refuse, if it can give you comfort,"—he said at last; " but it seems to me that there is no need of haste as yet. Thou thyself sayest that I am better."

" Thou art better, Evgény, thou art better; but who knows, for all that depends upon the will of God, and when thou hast fulfilled thy duty . . . . ."

"No, I will wait,"—interrupted Bazároff.—" I agree with thee that the crisis has arrived. But if we are both mistaken, what then? They give the communion to the unconscious also."

" For mercy's sake, Evgény. . . ."

" I will wait. And now I want to sleep. Don't disturb me."

And he laid his head in its former position.

The old man rose, seated himself in the arm-chair, and gripping his chin, began to bite his fingers. . .

The rumble of a carriage with springs,[1] that sound which is peculiarly noticeable in the depths

[1] On account of the bad roads, most carriages for country use are built without springs.—TRANSLATOR.

of the country, suddenly struck his ear. Nearer, nearer rolled the light wheels; and now the snorting of horses was audible. . . . Vasíly Ivánovitch sprang to his feet and rushed to the window. A two-seated carriage, drawn by four horses, was driving into the court-yard of his tiny house. Without pausing to consider what this might signify, he ran out on the porch, in an outburst of senseless joy. . . . A liveried lackey opened the carriage door; a lady with a black veil and a black mantle alighted from it. . . .

"I am Madame Odíntzoff,"—she said.—"Is Evgény Vasílitch alive? You are his father? I have brought a doctor with me."

"Benefactress!"—exclaimed Vasíly Ivánovitch, and seizing her hand, he pressed it convulsively to his lips, while the doctor whom Anna Sergyéevna had brought, a small man in spectacles, with a German physiognomy, alighted in a leisurely way from the carriage. "He is still alive; my Evgény is alive, and now he will be saved! Wife! wife! . . . An angel from heaven has come to us. . . ."

"What is it, O Lord!"—stammered the old woman, as she ran out of the drawing-room, and comprehending nothing then and there in the anteroom, fell at the feet of Anna Sergyéevna, and began, like a mad woman, to kiss her gown.

"What are you doing? What are you doing?"—Anna Sergyéevna kept reiterating; but Arína

Vlásievna paid no heed to her, and Vasíly Ivánovitch merely repeated: "An angel! an angel!"

"*Wo ist der Kranke?* And where is the patient?" said the doctor at last, not without some indignation.

Vasíly Ivánovitch came to his senses.—"Here, here, please follow me, *werthester Herr Kollege,*"—he added, reviving an ancient memory.

"Eh!"—ejaculated the German, and made a sour grimace.

Vasíly Ivánovitch conducted him to the study.

"The doctor from Anna Sergyéevna Odíntzoff,"—he said, bending down to his son's very ear;—"and she is here herself."

Bazároff suddenly opened his eyes.—"What didst thou say?"

"I say that Anna Sergyéevna Odíntzoff is here, and has brought her doctor to thee."

Bazároff gazed about him.—"She is here. . . I want to see her."

"Thou shalt see her, Evgény; but first the doctor and I must have a talk. I will narrate to him the whole history of thy illness, since Sídor Sídoritch" (this was the name of the district physician) "has gone away, and we will hold a little consultation."

Bazároff glanced at the German.—"Well, have your talk as quickly as possible, only not in Latin, for I understand the meaning of *jam moritur.*"

"*Der Herr scheint des Deutschen mächtig zu sein,*"—began the new disciple of Æsculapius turning to Vasíly Iványovitch.

"*Ich . . . . habe . . .* you had better talk Russian," said the old man.

"Ah, ah! so dat 's de vay it ees. . . As you like . . ." And the consultation began.

Half an hour later, Anna Sergyéevna, escorted by Vasíly Iványovitch, entered the room. The doctor had contrived to whisper to her that the recovery of the sick man was not to be thought of.

She cast a glance at Bazároff . . . and halted at the door, so startled was she by his swollen and, at the same time, corpse-like face, with its dimmed eyes riveted upon her. She was simply frightened, with a sort of cold and insufferable dread; the thought that she would not have felt like that if she were really in love with him, flashed instantaneously through her mind.

"Thank you,"—he said, with an effort;—"I did not expect this. It is a good deed. So we have met again, as you promised."

"Anna Sergyéevna has been so kind,"—began Vasíly Iványovitch.

"Father, leave us.—Anna Sergyéevna, you permit me? I think that now . . ."

He indicated his feeble, outstretched body with a movement of his head.

Vasíly Iványovitch withdrew.

"Thanks,"—repeated Bazároff.—"This is a

deed in royal style. They say that Tzars also visit the dying."

"Evgény Vasílitch, I hope . . . ."

"Ekh, Anna Sergyéevna, let us speak the truth. I am done for. I have fallen under the wheel. And it turns out that there was no need to think of the future. Death is an ancient jest, but new to each person. So far, I am not afraid . . . . and then unconsciousness will come, and *fuit!*" (He waved his hand feebly.)—"Well, what 's the use of my saying to you . . . .' I love you ' ! That had no sense before, much less now. Love is a form, and my own form is already decomposing. I had better say that—what a splendid woman you are! And now you stand there, so beautiful. . . ."

Anna Sergyéevna involuntarily shuddered.

"Never mind, be not disturbed . . . . sit down there. . . Don't come near me: for my malady is contagious."

Anna Sergyéevna swiftly crossed the room and seated herself in an arm-chair beside the divan on which Bazároff lay.

"Magnanimous!"—he whispered. "Okh, how near, and how young, and fresh, and pure . . . . in this hateful room! . . . . Well, goodbye! may you live long; that is the best thing of all; and enjoy yourself while yet there is time. Behold, what a disgusting spectacle: the worm is half crushed, yet it bristles up. And, you see, I

thought also: I will yet accomplish many deeds; I shall not die—not I! there 's the aim, for I am a giant! And now the giant's whole problem is to die decorously, although no one cares about that. . . . . It makes no difference; I will not evade the issue."

Bazároff ceased speaking and began to feel for his glass. Anna Sergyéevna gave him a drink, without removing her glove, and breathing timorously the while.

"You will forget me,"—he began again;—"the dead is no fit comrade for the living. My father will tell you, 'Just see what a man Russia is losing.' . . . That is nonsense, but do not undeceive the old man. Anything for the sake of soothing the child . . . . you know. And treat my mother kindly. For such people as they are not to be found in your grand society, even in the day-time with a light. . . . . I am necessary to Russia. . . . No, evidently, I am not necessary. And who is? A shoemaker is necessary, a tailor is necessary, so is a butcher; . . . . he sells meat, ... a butcher; . . . . stay, I am getting mixed up. . . . . Yonder is a forest . . ."

Bazároff laid his hand on his brow.

Anna Sergyéevna bent toward him.—"Evgény Vasílitch, I am here . . . ."

He instantly clasped her hand and half sat up.—"Farewell,"—he said, with sudden force, and his eyes flashed with their last gleam.—"Fare-

well. . . Listen . . . . you know, I did not kiss you then. . . . Breathe upon the expiring lamp, and let it be extinguished. . . . ."

Anna Sergyéevna touched her lips to his brow.

"Enough!"—he said, and dropped back on his pillow.—"Now . . . . darkness . . ."

Anna Sergyéevna softly left the room.—"Well?"—Vasíly Ivánovitch asked her in a whisper.

"He has fallen asleep,"—she replied, in a barely audible tone.

Bazároff was not fated to wake again. Toward evening he fell into complete unconsciousness, and on the following day he died. Father Alexyéi performed over him the rites of religion. When he was anointed,[1] when the holy chrism touched his breast, one of his eyes opened, and it seemed as though, at the sight of the priest in his vestments, of the smoking censer, the light in front of the holy picture, something resembling a shudder of fear was reflected on the dying face. When at last he breathed his last sigh, and universal groaning arose in the house, Vasíly Ivánovitch was seized with a sudden transport of violence. "I said that I would repine,"—he shouted hoarsely, with a flaming, distorted countenance, shaking his fist in the air, as though he were men-

[1] The Rite of Holy Unction in the Catholic Church of the East differs from Extreme Unction in the Roman Church, in that (among other points) it may be administered when the sufferer is not expected to die: for healing only, in the Apostolic sense.—Translator.

acing some one. "And I will repine, I will repine!" But Arína Vlásievna, all in tears, flung herself upon his neck, and both fell on their knees. —"So,"—as Anfísushka afterward narrated in the servants' hall,—"they bowed their heads side by side, like sheep at noonday. . . ."

But the midday heat passes and evening draws on, and the night, and then comes the return to the quiet refuge, where the suffering and the weary find sweet repose. . . .

XXVIII

Six months have passed. The white winter has come, with its stern stillness of cloudless frosts, dense creaking snow, rosy hoar-frost on the trees, pale-emerald sky, caps of smoke above the chimneys, clumps of steam from the doors opened for a moment, the fresh faces, as though bitten, of the people, and the bustling trot of benumbed horses. The January day is already drawing to its close; the evening chill is seizing the motionless air in a still tighter grip, and the blood-red sunset is dying out. The lights have been kindled in the windows of the house at Márino; Prokófitch, in a black dress suit and white gloves, is laying the table for seven persons. A week previously, in the little parish church, quietly, and almost without witnesses, two weddings had taken place: Arkády's to Kátya, and Nikolái Petróvitch's to Fénitchka; and on the day in question Nikolái Petróvitch is giving a farewell dinner for his brother, who is about to take his departure for Moscow on business. Anna Sergyéevna had gone thither also immediately after the wedding, after having lavishly endowed the young couple. Precisely at three o'clock all

assembled round the table. Mítya was placed there also; he had been provided with a nurse, in a glazed brocade coronet-cap. Pável Petróvitch took his seat between Kátya and Fénitchka: the "husbands" settled themselves beside their wives. Our acquaintances have changed of late: all of them seem to have grown handsomer and more manly; Pável Petróvitch alone has grown thin, which, however, has imparted still more elegance and *grand-seigneurism* to his expressive features. . . . And Fénitchka also has become a different person. In a fresh silken gown, with a gold chain on her neck, she sat with respectful composure,—respectful toward herself, toward everything which surrounded her, and smiled, as though she wished to say: "You must excuse me, I am not to blame." And not she alone, but all the others smiled also, and seemed to be excusing themselves; all felt somewhat awkward, somewhat sad, and, in reality, very comfortable. Each one listened to the other with amusing amiability, as though all of them had entered into an agreement to play some artless comedy. Kátya was more composed than all the rest: she gazed confidingly about her, and was able to observe that Nikolái Petróvitch had already succeeded in falling head over ears in love with her. Before the end of the dinner he rose, and taking his wine-glass in hand, he addressed himself to Pável Petróvitch:

"Thou art leaving us . . . . thou art leaving

us, my dear brother,"—he began:—" of course, not for long; but, nevertheless, I cannot refrain from expressing to thee that I . . . . that we . . . . so far as I . . . . so far as we . . . . That 's the difficulty, that we do not know how to make speeches! Arkády, do thou speak!"

" No, papa, I am not prepared."

" And I prepared myself finely! Simply then, brother, permit me to embrace thee, to wish thee all that is good, and return to us as speedily as possible!"

Pável Petróvitch kissed all present, not excluding Mítya, of course; over and above this, he kissed Fénitchka's hand, which she did not know how to offer properly, and draining his glass, which had been filled for the second time, he said, with a profound sigh: " Be happy, my friends! *Farewell!*"—This English tail to his speech passed unnoticed, but all were touched.

" In memory of Bazároff,"—whispered Kátya in her husband's ear, as she clinked glasses with him. In reply, Arkády pressed her hand warmly, but could not bring himself to propose that toast aloud.

This would appear to be the end? But perchance some one of our readers would like to know what each one of the persons whom we have introduced is doing now, precisely at the present moment. We are ready to gratify him.

Anna Sergyéevna has recently married, not for

love, but from conviction, one of the future prominent men of Russia, a very clever man, a lawyer with strong practical sense, a firm will, and a remarkable gift of words,—a man who is still young, kind, and cold as ice. They live on good terms with each other, and will, in all probability, attain to happiness . . . perchance to love. Princess X. . . has died, forgotten on the very day of her death. The Kirsánoff's, father and son, have settled down in Márino. Their affairs are beginning to right themselves. Arkády has become an ardent farmer, and the "farm" already yields a fairly large income. Nikolái Petróvitch has been made an Arbitrator of the Peace,[1] and toils with all his might; he is incessantly travelling about over his section; he makes long speeches (he is of the opinion that the peasants must be "taught," that is to say, they must be reduced to a state of exhaustion by frequent repetition of one and the same set of words), and, nevertheless, to tell the truth, he does not wholly satisfy either the cultivated nobles, who talk now with chic and again with melancholy, about the *man*cipation (pronouncing the *man* through their noses), nor the uneducated nobles, who unceremoniously revile "*thot mun*cipation." He is too tender to suit either party. A son, Kólya, has been born to

[1] A class of officials, appointed after the emancipation of the serfs, to adjust the questions which arose between the landed proprietors and the serfs as to the division of the land.—TRANSLATOR.

Katerína Sergyéevna, and Mítya is already running about like a fine, dashing fellow, and chatters volubly. Fénitchka (Fedósya Nikoláevna) adores no one—after her husband and son—so much as her daughter-in-law, and when the latter seats herself at the piano she is delighted not to leave her all day long. By the way, let us make mention of Piótr. He has stiffened up for good, with stupidity and pompousness, pronounces every *e* like *iu: tiupiúr, obiuzpiútchiun*,[1] but he also has married, and acquired a very respectable dowry with his bride, the daughter of a market-gardener in the town, who refused two fine suitors, merely because they did not possess watches: but Piótr not only had a watch, but patent-leather half-boots into the bargain.

In Dresden, on the Brühl terrace, between two and four o'clock, at the most fashionable time for promenading, you may meet a man about fifty years of age, who is already completely grey, and seems to be suffering from gout, but is still handsome, elegantly attired, and with that peculiar stamp which a man acquires only by long association with the highest classes of society. This man is Pável Petróvitch. He has quitted Moscow and gone abroad to restore his health, and has taken up his residence in Dresden, where he consorts mostly with the English and with travel-

[1] Instead of *tepér* (now); *obezpétchen* (provided for).—Translator.

ling Russians. With the English, his manner is simple, almost modest, yet not lacking in dignity; they find him rather tiresome, but respect in him a perfect gentleman. With the Russians he is more at his ease, gives free play to his bile, sneers at himself and at them; but all this is very charming, and careless, and decorous, as he does it. He entertains Slavyanophil views: every one knows that this is considered *très distingué* in the upper circles. He never reads anything in Russian, but on his writing-table there is a silver ash-tray in the form of a peasant's bast slipper. Our tourists run after him a great deal. Matvyéi Ilitch Kolyázin, when he was in *temporary opposition*, paid him a majestic visit, as he was passing through on his way to a Bohemian watering-place; and the natives, with whom, however, he has very little to do, fairly revere him. No one can obtain a ticket for the Court Choir, the theatre, and so forth, so easily and so quickly as *der Herr Baron von Kirsánoff*. He always does as much good as can; he still makes some noise: not for nothing had he once been a lion;—but life is painful for him—more painful than he himself suspects. . . . One needs but to watch him in the Russian church, when, leaning against the wall, apart, he falls into thought, and does not move for a long time, bitterly setting his teeth, then suddenly he comes to himself, and begins, almost imperceptibly, to cross himself. . . .

Madame Kukshín also has gone abroad. She

is now in Heidelberg, and is studying the natural sciences no more, but architecture, in which, according to her statement, she has discovered new laws. As of yore, she haunts the society of students, especially that of the young Russian physicists and chemists, with whom Heidelberg is filled, and who, after at first amazing the simple-minded German professors with their sober views of things, afterward amaze those same professors with their utter idleness and absolute laziness. With two or three chemists of this description, who cannot distinguish oxygen from nitrogen, but are filled full of self-abnegation and respect for themselves, and with the great Elisyévitch, Sítnikoff, who also is preparing to be great, is sauntering about Petersburg, and, according to his own statement, is carrying on Bazároff's "cause." It is said that some one recently gave him a thrashing, but he did not remain in debt: in an obscure little article, inserted in an obscure little newspaper, he hinted that the man who had thrashed him was a coward. He calls this irony. His father torments him, as of yore, and his wife considers him a fool . . . and a literary man.

There is a small village cemetery in one of the remote corners of Russia. Like almost all our cemeteries, it presents a sorry aspect: the trench which surrounds it has long since been overgrown; the grey wooden crosses have drooped and are rotting beneath their penthouses, which once were

painted; the stone slabs are all out of place, as though some one were thrusting them up from below; two or three denuded trees barely afford a scanty shade; sheep wander unchecked over the graves.—But among these there is one, which no man touches, which no beast tramples on: only the birds alight upon it and carol at the dawn. An iron railing surrounds it; two young fir-trees are planted at each end of it: Evgény Bazároff is buried in that grave. Thither, from the hamlet hard by, two old people, already decrepit—husband and wife—come frequently. Supporting each other, they advance with painful tread; they approach the railing, fall upon their knees, and weep long and bitterly, and gaze long and attentively at the dumb stone, beneath which lies their son; they exchange a brief word, remove the dust from the stone, adjust the branches of the fir-trees, and again fall to praying, and cannot quit that spot, where they seem to be nearer to their son, to their memories of him. . . Can it be that their prayers, their tears, are fruitless? Can it be that love, holy, devoted love, is not all-powerful? Oh, no! However passionate, sinful, rebellious, may be the heart which has taken refuge in the grave, the flowers which grow upon it gaze tranquilly at us with their innocent eyes: not alone of eternal repose do they speak to us, of that great repose of "indifferent" nature; they speak also of eternal reconciliation and of life everlasting. . .

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